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THE

DIVINE INSTINCT,

Nathaniel Recommended to *Horington*

M E N.

Translated from the French.



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Advertisement.

THE Translator having had nothing in View, in the Publication of the ensuing Piece, but the Welfare of Mankind, thinks it needless to say much about it.

If any should charge him with Want of Elegance in the Stile or Expression, it may blunt the Edge of their Censure to be informed he is no *Author* by Profession, but a *Tradesman*, from whom such Exactness cannot reasonably be expected. And, as 'tis his Judgment that this is of little Concernment, so he hath been little solicitous about it; endeavouring only to render his Author's Sentiments in their full Strength.

It may not be amiss to observe, that no Translator being answerable for the

ADVERTISEMENT.

Truth of every Part of the Work he translates, so if there should be any Thing in this contrary to the Reader's Principles, 'tis hoped, it will not be charged on the Translator. This is said with a View to some Principles of the Author's, respecting a FUTURE STATE, which perhaps might have been omitted, without much Detriment to the Work ; but this being a Liberty that others might object to as unjustifiable, in regard to the Author, as mutilating his Performance, it hath been thought proper to publish it entire, and leave it to the Reader's Candour.



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The Author's PREFACE.

THE extreme Facility with which the Men of our Times give into Libertinism, and enlist themselves entirely on that Side of the Question, seems to shew in them a Disposition to be of some Side.

The Want of Principle produces this Facility, and yet those Principles which they adopt, and which lead to Libertinism, shew they have a certain Inclination for some Principles. There is one Trial more to be made; which is, to present them with a RELIGION, which is the Source of all true Principles, as well as the only Side for a Man of Sense to espouse. To present them with what deserves to be called RELIGION, and which, for that Reason, ought to be perfectly convenient for them, and to be as much superior to what usually bears that Name, as what proceeds from Divine Wisdom is superior to those Imaginations and Reasonings which Men form; this is the End of this Treatise, which is addressed to all those among Men who dislike Emptiness in the Business of Religion, and prefer to it what the World appears to them to have of Reality. To all those who have not entirely renounced Humanity, and who to be Men indeed (to enter into Religion as much as Humanity requires) may want only to be encouraged to do it, to be informed of the Excellency of Religion, and the Advantages which the Times we live in present them.

The Author's PREFACE.

These Times (the latter Times, on which we are entering) bring with them not only new Graces (which indeed, in what they contain of particular and hidden, may be of a Nature to be contested) but also new Knowledge. Truths which strike, and which prove both the Importance of those Times, and that they are come. Some Glimpses of these Truths may be met with in going thro' this Piece. Afterwards, if it's necessary, and if the Notion of Fanaticism (under which Head, according to the Taste in Vogue, this Essay may be ranked) does not frighten those to whom it is addressed, there may be Means found to prove to them more exactly, that these Times are come which they are so deeply concerned not to reject, and which take their Value more from the Graces that are designed for Men of good Dispositions than from the Truths which shall be discovered.



T H E



T H E
D I V I N E I N S T I N C T
Recommended to Men.



THE DIVINE INSTINCT is the Source of all that is good in Man. Religion is founded thereon, and from thence all Truth derives its Force. It suits the Greatness of God that it should be thus; that Man should have within him a Seed of *Religion*, or spiritual Life, as he has a Seed of natural Life, or *Immortality*; since it is by Religion alone that this Immortality becomes a Good to him. The Darkeness and Delusions which, in this World, are from all Sides presenting themselves to him, require that he should have something divine in him, to guard him against their Influence; and even the original Dignity of Man, considered in itself, requires it. In every View Man must have something in him for his Direction; and we must not imagine that Divine Wisdom should have subjected Religion (the most important of all Things to him) either to his own Reason, or that of another, to the most uncertain and variable Thing about him, and which was given him for a different Use. Besides, God alone being good, it follows, that Religion, which contains the whole Good of Man, must flow from God, as it tends to,

him ; that he must be both its Principle and End. This Principle, this Seed of Religion, in Man, is the DIVINE INSTINCT placed in him, the WORD by which he was created, and which alone can change and create him anew. By this *Word* it is that Man has yet a Communication with God, and God with Man. He could not leave him, in the Wanderings into which he is led by the Word of his own making, by Reasoning, which seduces and leads him, to himself ; as that *Word* which is Truth leads him to the Divinity that declares it. To rescue him from the Condition in which he is, he first of all speaks to him in his *Conscience*, where he erects his Tribunal, to judge down all the Evil in him, all that which hinders his Return to God ; and afterwards he speaks to him by the *Divine Instinct*, which he has given him for his Guide, and which leads him into all Good, by the Path which *Conscience* has opened to him. 'Tis only this Way, as the Divinity speaks to Man, that he is nourished by that Truth which brings Life ; and the Instructions that come to him from without are only efficacious as they are adopted and made powerful by the inward *Word*. This *Word* makes itself heard in his Heart more or less, as it finds there more or less of Uprightness, on the Love of Truth : For it is on this Disposition, on the Uprightness of the Heart, that the *Word* operates, after it has wrought in Man this Uprightness itself, and has formed something in him on which it may subsist. Man was made to be the Habitation, the Temple, of God, where he takes Pleasure to be adored in secret, and secretly to work his Wonders, before he manifests them without, and openly rewards those who have adored him in secret. *He dwells not in Temples made by the Hands of Man* in any Sense. 'Tis he himself that builds the
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Place of his Habitation, and 'tis for this End that he has placed his *Word* in the Heart of Man. Its first Care is to cleanse and put the Heart in a Condition to serve him as an Abode; from thence it disposes of the whole Man, and brings him to Order, to a Dependence on the Divinity; in which consists the Restoration of Man.

To concur with this Design of Divine Providence, 'tis especially necessary that Men suffer themselves to be cured of the Diffidence in which they are with regard to the *inward Word*. They must reverence the Ways of God in themselves, that they may not fear to pass from the Religion which Men teach (and which is arrived at its Period) to that which comes immediately from God, and which, comprehending all that is most excellent and divine, was reserved for the latter Times, for the Times in which that which is divine should be manifested. After this it should not be difficult to make Men comprehend, that the Spirit of God dwelling in them more or less, must have with it that Proportion of Truth which they peculiarly want; that in the Disposition to receive it is found the Faith required of them, as what is most agreeable to the Divinity, and which he is ready to give to those who desire it; that, to make a due Use of a Disposition which they can only receive from the Divinity, they ought not to think themselves under a Necessity of seeking the Truth elsewhere, and especially that they are not reduced to seek it from those, who, having only what they have given themselves, mere *Knowledge*, are mistaken as to God, who has no Regard to any thing but what comes from himself; that 'tis dishonourable to him to suppose that his Ways are of this Sort, that he puts Men into the Perplexity of being ignorant of what he requires of

them, and to the Necessity of providing for themselves People who may instruct them in it. It rejects this Reproach which the Blindness of Man might throw upon his Conduct, this Pretext which he might make for his being without Religion: And it shews him, in a very exact Manner, both the Place whence he ought to draw his Instruction, and those Places where this Instruction is not to be found, and where he foresaw that he would lose his Time in seeking it. *'It is not in the Heavens, that we should say, who shall go up to the Heavens to bring it down from thence, that we should understand it, in order to do it? Nor is it beyond the Sea, that we should say who shall fetch him from thence? but this Word is nigh thee, in thy Heart, and in thy Mouth, that thou might'st do it.* There is no Need of Doctors in the Science which they call Holy, and whose Studies seek him in the Heavens; nor of Doctors in those called Human Sciences; Sciences foreign to Man, in another Sense, and which are conversant about Things less high. There is no Need of Divines or Philosophers to make us understand the Will of God, as if that was the Means of making us do it. It is manifested in Man himself, and there is no one to whom it does not make itself known. These who are made his Trumpets for the Spirit of God to speak by to others, in his Name, have it in their Mouths where he puts it, and these who ought either to keep for their own Use, or else communicate to others, the Truths which for that End it discovers to them, have it in their Hearts. In both 'tis the same *Word*, and 'tis not given to be *known* barely, but to be *done*. It leads to that only, and one may venture to say that it has little or nothing intirely to be known. To be within every Man's Reach is its distinguished Character, and to be easily known, just in Proportion as it imports us to know it preferably
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to all other Things. To what will it lead both those who have it in themselves, and those to whom it ought to be declared? It leads them to something very simple, and yet at the same Time very great. *It is declared unto thee, O Man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of thee; to do Justice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.* This is Religion: There is but little to be known, but a great Work to be done. In Proportion as it is done, as Man advances, the Will of God is further made known to him; and he is shewed what he has further to do by the *inward Word*, by the DIVINE INSTINCT, which at the same Time puts him onward to perform it. It puts us on judging ourselves, under its Direction; to apply to ourselves the Condemnations which *Conscience* pronounces on the Evil in us; it renders us truly humane and merciful, as 'tis the Divine Mercy which acts in us, and is by this Means communicated to us; it makes us look upon God as continually present, and causes us to have him in view in all our Doings. By this we are made to walk along with him, and not barely to follow him; we act willingly, which gives a Value to our Obedience, and makes us rather the Friends of God than his Servants. 'Tis thus he becomes our God. The *Divine Instinct* operates all this in Man in such a Manner as to humble him in his Obedience, and to keep him from Self Complacency. By this, by the Humility in which it keeps him, it secures him the rest, and renders his Work compleat: At least it is thus with the People whom God forms in this Age with Spiritual *Israel*. And, as this People is gathered out of all People and all Nations, these are Truths to be declared to all Men whatever.

The Truth which leads to all others is that which regards the *Word*, by which Men were created, and
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which, after by their Revolt they had violated the Laws of their Creation, would create them anew, if, by their Faith in the Power of this *Word*, they give Place to a second Creation, more wonderful than the former; inasmuch as on their Side Faith enters into it, and by their own Consent they co-operate with it. It is high Time no longer to mistake this *Word*, and to invite those who are yet unacquainted with it to know and reverence it, as we do, and with us to receive that which should unite us among ourselves, and make our Happiness common, as well as unite us to God, who is our common Principle.

Man, created in the Image of God, and who should love him with all his Strength; Man, created simple, and dependent only on the Spirit of God, is fallen from this State: He is given up to Self-love and his own Reason, to the Reasonings which he forms at Pleasure; and in this Dependence he is fallen so low that what was divine in him, and should sanctify the rest, is withdrawn and center'd in himself, as in a Point; and this Point as it were lost in the Multiplicity and Disorder of the Heart of Man, so as to be easily mistaken. The Voice of God, confounded with the Voice of the Passions, and the various Workings of the Imagination, is for the most part unheard, and few there are who are attentive enough to discern it, and shew Mercy to that of God in them to keep it from languishing and being extinguished, as a Spark that is not kept alive. All the while this *Word* has all that is necessary to make itself known and revered, which is what renders Man culpable in not reverencing it. The Reproofs which it offers to him, in his *Conscience*, are just and quick, and they have a Character of Truth and Authority, which sets them above every Thing that comes from without and from Man.

Man. They make themselves felt by him thro' all the Self-Justifications he would fain oppose to them, and all the Reasonings he might frame could not stand a Moment against this *Word*. It tries the Heart and the Reins, every thing that passes in Man, both with regard to his Soul and Body; the most concealed Motives it knows, and judges them; it penetrates like a two-edged Sword; it makes its destroying Power to be felt, in a lively Manner, in regard to this twofold Disorder in Man, and it reaches to the Division of the Spirit from the Soul, as well as the Soul from the Body, so as to compleat the Re-establishment of Man in the threefold Life, which constitutes his Likeness to the Divinity. The Order observed in this Re-establishment is, that at first, and to re-establish the corporal Man, 'tis simply (*the Word which was in the Beginning*) the *Word*, as it appears to have something in it undeterminate, and that is not laid open; it works the Beginning of the Work of God in Man, and its Voice is chiefly heard in the Conscience: 'Tis JESUS CHRIST, as he is the *Way*. In a more advanced Period, and with regard to the intelligent Man, 'tis the *Word which is with God*; here it speaks openly, it shews itself divine, and God by this Means discovers to Man that he begins to be with God, and to partake of his Truth and Secrets: 'Tis JESUS CHRIST, as he is the *Truth*. Finally, and for the spiritual Man, the *Instinct*, in its utmost Exaltation, is the *Word which is God*, the *Word* which is the Spirit and Life, the Principle of the divine Life, and the divine Life itself: 'Tis JESUS CHRIST, as he is the *Life*, and finishes the Work his Father has given him to do.

The *Instinct* is in Man in little, all that it has been in the World in great. All the Good that Man can receive is held from it, and without it he could have

have no Good : He is deceived by what has only the Appearance of it, and God will not acknowledge what he has not produced.

In the simple and severe Language with which this *Word* at first treats us, it was necessary that God should afford it some outward Testimony, which should support it against the Accusations which bad Men and Enemies of Reproof would not fail to form against it ; that he should declare it our Light, *the true Light, which enlightens every Man that cometh into the World* ; the sure and general Light to which we ought to take Heed in this Region of Darknes and false Lights, in this Place of Reasoning and Uncertainty ; where, without a sure Guide that would not leave us, we could not chuse but wander and lose our Way, as Voyagers on the vast Ocean wander without the Help of the Compass, which shews them the Course they ought to steer ; without it they could only coast from Shore to Shore, and the Riches of the Ocean would remain unknown to them. The *Instinct* in the Heart of Man resembles this Wonder of Nature, in making us lose Sight of what's earthly, and freeing us from the narrow Bounds within which the Rules confine us. It leads us to God in his Immensity, and, by the obscure Faith which governs us, it makes him who dwells in Obscurity become the Source of all Light and all Good to us. There the *Instinct* causes us to rest, as the Needle tends to the North, where it finds its Place of Rest, and, by pointing out the North, makes us find the opposite Point, and shews all the Hours of the Day. All the Service that the Compass has been of to Men, the Discovery of a New World, and the Acquisition of those Riches which they have found there, is an Image of what the *Instinct* will do for us, for those who have
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the Courage to give themselves up to it. But in this, as in other Things, Men do Honour to the Appearance, but are deficient in the Reality.

Let us acknowledge the *Divine Instinct* as 'tis undervalued, which causes Man, unacquainted with it, to reject it; and by this very Mark especially let us recognize it. 'Tis the *Word which shines in Darkness*, among the Incertitudes and Errors which the Reason of Man scatters upon the Earth; the *Word which the World knows not*, because Man's Reason cannot comprehend it: This *Word* is even rejected of its own, of those who profess to belong to God, but who cannot resolve to depend on him entirely, by submitting themselves to an *Instinct* which is boundless, and which might require every thing from them. But to those that do receive it *it gives Power to become the Children of God*; it sets them in the Way in order to return to their Origin, and leads them in it; and all these who walk in it to the End, it reunites them to God, where Man not only finds all that he has lost, but the Creator reconciled, and become a tender Father, loads him with new Benefits, which the first Creation could not have supply'd him with. Those whom the *inward Word* leads by the customary Road, and who follow it so much the more easily, as their great Number and a Conformity of Ways make them march with Assurance; these, being conducted as by one Guide, and forming Companies, where every one strengthens himself by the Strength of others, constitute the Multitude of the People of God. But as the *Instinct* here lies hid among Rules and Reasonings, among all that they adopt, and which agrees to that Degree of Faith which they may have, they scarcely are acquainted with what determines them. They have but little Commerce with the Divinity, who only
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grows familiar with Man thro' the *Divine Instinct* acknowledged for what it is, and embraced on that Footing; those who acknowledge and follow it under its proper Name, and independent of established Rules, are more agreeable to the Divine Being. They enter every one as by himself into the different Paths wherein the *Instinct* engages them, and where they see no Traces of any one that has gone before them. These have Singularity and all Sorts of Difficulties and Contradictions to encounter; but, in surmounting them, and giving themselves up perfectly to their Guide, they yield more Honour to him that sent him to them; and the Guide, rejoicing in this, and to make them rejoice in the Solitude into which he leads them, instead of acting barely the Part of a Guide, he behaves towards them as a Fellow-Traveler; he enters into familiar Converse with them, and entertains them on the End of their Journey, and whatever else relates to it. These are distinguished from the Multitude, and become as Guides themselves, the Guides of those who trust not enough to the *inward* Guide, and who, notwithstanding, ought to be thought the People of God. Among those two Sorts, among those who more or less follow the *Divine Instinct*, is Religion found, and there is no other.

The different Degrees of Religion are proportion'd to the different Degrees of Faith and Obedience to the *Divine Instinct*; and the *Instinct* itself determines the different Degrees, and carries every one to what is fit for him, and, in this Respect too, evinces itself to be our true Guide. But some may say, that this *Instinct* is not always to be trusted, and that *Conscience*, by whose Voice it speaks to us, has itself Need to be enlightened, for Want of which it varies and produces

ces all Sorts of Oddnesses and Extravagancies. It has its *False*, which should be guarded against, and which has more Effect than what is *Real* in it; from whence has arisen *Fanaticism*, and all the Troubles it has occasioned.

There are People who talk this Language, and seek to render the *inward Word* suspected by other People, the better to succeed in their Endeavours to render it suspected by themselves.

In order to secure themselves against the Reproaches of *Conscience*, in its Place, as a Light in spiritual Matters, they would introduce and persuade Men to receive *Reason*, which was given for their Direction in outward Things. They would fain make Religion dependent on Reasonings, which they are skill'd to manage as their Interest leads them; Reasons which they forge, and for the most part turn their Edge against Religion itself, as Men forge and whet up Iron for the Destruction of each other, while Nature gave it for quite different Uses. It is true that *Conscience* has its *False*; but this concludes nothing against it. Every Thing, in the Ways of God, has its Opposite, that Men may rest in nothing, and that every Thing may lead them to God himself. All his Ways are liable to be abused by Men; and perhaps in Proportion as they contain what is excellent and divine, they may be liable to be abus'd in the same Proportion, and by that Means rendered equivocal. On this Footing, *Fanaticism*, the *inward False*, as it is efficacious in its Kind, may teach us the Power of the *inward True*, the Operation of the Spirit of God. 'Tis doubtless an Image of it, as the Wonders of false Magic are an Image of the Wonders of the true. But Men are accustomed to make a different Use of the false; they make it serve to combat the true, and strengthen the

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false

false in themselves, which makes them watchful to remark it out of themselves, and skilful to make their own Use of it. The Variations, which may serve as a Pretence (for those who are on the watch for them) not to depend on *Conscience*, don't frighten him who wants simply to be guided. These Variations don't take their Rise in *Conscience* itself, but are the Product of foreign Causes; the Malignity of Man produces them, the Corruption which is in him, and which the Judgments of *Conscience* should destroy. Instead of letting his irregular Desires, and all that is selfish in him, be set at rights, he would fain keep something alive, and in this Disposition of Mind he interrogates his *Conscience*. By the secret Wishes of his Heart he solicits it to consent to his Desires, and he hopes it may consent to them. 'Tis then possible it may happen, that the Wrong he would do his *Conscience*, to the divine Voice that speaks to him, may fall back on himself, that what he would fain have said to him should be said. And this Conduct has nothing in it incompatible with the Nature of God, whom Man ought to reverence so far as not to ask Counsel of him but in the Sincerity of his Heart. It answers him according to the Idol that is there (if there is one), and it gives him what he really desires, rather than what he would seem to desire, and what he knew would not be to his Liking if it had been given him. It is towards Man as Man is towards it; right to those that are right, and crooked to those that are crooked. Of what then does Man complain, when it was in his Power not to be deceiv'd, if that happen'd to him which he asked for in the Bottom of his Heart?

Conscience, being the Tribunal of God in Man, must be true, and agreeable to God; but Man, in his Perversities, puts himself out of a Capacity to draw

draw that simple Advantage which he might have from it. And there are Times when the Divinity, in letting him hear what deceives him, speaks to him in the Language of his Justice, and not that of his Truth; Times when Justice fits him better, and prepares him for Truth. Let us at all Times reverence the marvellous Ways of God, and not destroy that which is the Source of Truth in Man, or general Truth, by particular Cases, which conclude against Man only, who draws them on himself, and which in their Consequences may be of Use to make Truth more revered by him. Let us have as much Sense to value the *Instinct* that guides us as we have for that which represents it. Should we chuse to throw by the Compass, because of the Variation to which it is subject, or is occasioned by Irons approaching it? It is not denied, that he who gives himself up to his inward Motions entirely may find himself driven to do Things which are Odneffes and Follies in the Eyes of *Reason*. But does not Foolishness enter into the Ways of God, in what he dispenses to Men, to humble them, and make them lose the Opinion they have of their own Excellence, and the Esteem of the World, which nourishes it and lies as a Block in their Way? Cannot God, by an adopted Folly, put to the Proof the entire Obedience which he requires from those who have devoted themselves entirely to his Service? And does the Scripture furnish us with nothing that leads to this? Might not that which it calls *the Foolishness of God* have a Place here? And would it not produce what would look like Foolishness in the Eyes of Men? Is it not necessary that JESUS CHRIST should be Foolishness to some as well as a Stumbling-block to others? And where shall this be accomplished if it is not in his own, in those in whom he inhabits and directs?

How will you have a Man to become a Fool, in order to become wise, but by the Foolishness which God dispenses to him? That is to say, by suffering himself to be conducted by the *Instinct*, which puts him onward to accomplish the Designs which God has upon him. Let us rather say, that the *Instinct* in us would not be divine, if it only puts us on doing what is reasonable, and which draws the Approbation of Men; that we then should have no Need of the *Instinct*; no one would be *persecuted for Righteousness*, for what God wills, and Men will not, and never for the sake of JESUS CHRIST would they *say all manner of Evil* against those who believe in him, and obey the Attractions of his Holy Spirit: That is to say, that what is most wonderful in the Ways of God, and which must produce the Glorification of the Just, would not come to pass.

Those who urge against the Interior the Variations which happen to it, the strange Things which by this Means are required of Men, and take Occasion from thence to cry down *Conscience* and the *Divine Instinct*, under the different Names which they bestow upon it: Those who set Men loose from the Scruples of *Conscience*, in making them regard them for a quite different Thing, or in assisting them to get over them, do them all possible Damage; for the Misfortune of Men is, that they are not conscientious, or (what comes to the same thing) not sufficiently so; that they don't enough respect those Scruples that make the Way so streight as it is good it should be for every one; and all their Instructions and Exhortations, which their Teachers may substitute in the Place of *Conscience* discredited, will in no wise repair the Damage they have done them. These Things themselves are only rendered effectual to them by *Conscience*,

science, and 'tis but as the Teachers awaken it in them that they are of any Service. In discrediting it, they do that precisely which they accuse *Conscience* of doing; they deceive those who consult them; they vary to Infinity in what they substitute in its stead, and have established the greatest of Oddnesses; for, according to them, the Divinity has given us an uncertain and blind Guide, which wants itself to be guided. Providence suffers this Treatment to be offered to the *Divine Instinct*, that those who have Eyes to see may know it by this Mark, which confirms all the others, and that by this Mark also they may know those who offer it this Treatment, what Spirit it is that puts them to work. Here especially they discover themselves, in endeavouring to abolish or discredit that which is the Source of Life, as well as of Truth, in Man. *Jesus Christ in us* is a Mystery to them. They deny his coming in the Flesh, as it is continued to be done, as 'tis accomplished in Man himself. And this Coming is the Object of our Faith, of that Faith *which overcometh the World*, and is Matter of Confession to us before Men. Here is unravelled the Mystery of the Tryal we ought to make of the Spirits, of the *Spirit which is from God*, and *Spirit of Antichrist*; and one comprehends the Extent of this Mystery. *Conscience*, discredited by the Doctors, is about to prove to them her Power by discrediting them, by putting a great Number among Men to drop the Doctors. And, as they have discredited the Operations of *Conscience* under the Name of *Fanaticism*, 'tis also by what they call *Fanaticism* that *Conscience* shall discredit them.

It is not only with respect to the secret and extraordinary Ways of God, with regard to his Ways in some Men whom he peculiarly distinguishes, that we

ought to form our Judgment on what is called Singularity and Oddness. We ought to take it for granted, that the Singular, the Odd, in the Eyes of Men, constitutes the most distinguished Character of the Ways of God. And, if this has not appeared hitherto, if in Religion we have only accustomed ourselves to what is reasonable, and according to the Taste of Men, it is because the Period of the Gentiles, which has lasted so many Ages, required only this. The Gentiles, all these who, instead of being under the immediate Conduct of the Spirit of God, are under that of Men, act consistently with this Dependence; they will comprehend, they will see clear; and on this Footing it is one may be conducted by Men. And Divine Wisdom has ordained, that those who were to make up the innumerable Multitude in his Œconomy should be of this Character; but this is what is most mixt and least divine in the divine Œconomy. This Religion must have its Period, and this Period (which was to last till the second Coming of Christ) is come. The People which succeeds the Gentiles, and in whom are to be manifested the Wonders of God reserved for the latter Times, the Wonders which manifest the Divinity, who had as it were been hidden, this People is called to walk by Faith, and not by Reason, nor the Light which agrees with Reason; for Faith (entire Confidence) honours God in a quite different Manner from Reason. 'Tis perhaps the only Means of honouring him truly. This Faith is exercised and proved by what appears opposite to Reason, by what is as a Stumbling-block to it; and the People called to honour God truly is composed of *Israelites who walk by Faith*, of *Jews in Spirit*, who are really that which the *Jews* according to the Flesh were a Figure of; they are the true *Jews*, who are
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not so outwardly, by the Ceremonies and Things which they observe (by Acts of Religion seen of Men), but inwardly by depending on the Spirit of God which is in them, and leads them into all Truth. They have their Hearts circumcised by the same Spirit, which does its Office in them especially, as it cuts off Self, all that which is done in Man's Will. These *Jews* draw not their Praise from Men, not even from good People (who, whilst they are not *Jews* themselves, cannot but condemn them), but from God, to whom only they belong, and whose Will they do. All the Opposition between what is from God and what is from Man shews itself here: 'Tis here that his Thoughts are not our Thoughts, nor his Ways our Ways; that his Ways and his Thoughts are as much above our Ways and our Thoughts as Heaven is above the Earth. Those among Men who are called to be the People of God, and principally those who are the First-born, who are to break the Way to others, lay by their own Reason, and all it may suggest to them against his Ways, as they leave the Earth in withdrawing their Inclinations from earthly Things, and give themselves up to all that God may require of them, to all the Proofs to which he may put their Faith and Sincerity, to prove them thereby; to prove especially their Sincerity, which makes the Essential in *Israel*, and out of which there can be no true Faith. God observes with regard to them an equivocal Conduct; that what appears to be divine and what seems not so are mixt, and succeed one another, in such Manner, that Man may have some Sort of Choice to declare the Whole, if not for divine, at least for something that might come from God, and to receive it on that Footing; or, in suffering his Reason to act, and declare this Mixture as a quite

different Thing, as false, and so to reject it. That is to say, either to shew a Respect for what is divine, tho' he cannot unravel it ; or Falseness, an Inclination to Pretences, which excuses him from submitting himself to what is from God, or might possibly be so ; for our Reverence for the divine ought to extend itself to every Thing that may be so, to every Thing that may come to us from a hidden God : For how shall he hide himself from Man, if it is not in his Ways, in what they have that is strange in the Eyes of Reason ?

Now, Salvation coming from the *Jews*, it is right for those who would participate in it, who would have a Share in the Happiness which is ordained for this People of God, to enter at least into some Knowledge of his Ways, not only because they may not oppose him and become his Enemies, but also because if God approach them more nearly, they may not resist the Designs he may have on them. A very important Truth, therefore, for the Times in which we are, and which should help us to get over the Doubts which the Extraordinary in the Ways of God is capable of begetting in us, is for us to believe that Divine Wisdom is pleased to present to Men what is divine in a Manner that is divine, and quite different to what they could have imagined. It accompanies it with Stumbling-Blocks, with Pretences to reject it, to the End, that the Liberty of Man may have Play ; it being to this Liberty, to what is most excellent in Man, that it presents the Divine, that it may be honoured as it ought to be, that it may be received among all the strange and disagreeable Things which accompany it. Or, if it is rejected, it may not as itself, which would render Man very culpable, but by those same strange Things that are proper to serve as
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Pretences to the Falseness that is in Man; for the Divine is of too great a Value to admit that Man should be forced to receive it in spite of himself, or that he should be solicited by the Splendor which surrounds it: And it is required that those for whom it is ordained should be carried towards it by the Desire they have after it, by a Desire which shews it is as it ought to be, by combating all that is in Opposition to it, and surmounting it; for the People of God must be a victorious as well as a willing People. It is necessary also that the Falseness of those that seek Pretences not to believe should be manifested, and that these and the others should see the Fruits and Consequences of it.

Men honour the Christian Religion, or rather the Discourses that speak about it, because it is establish'd to do them Honour, and because by this Means they get the *Name* of Christians; but at Bottom they are indifferent towards and condemn the *Spirit* of *Jesus Christ*, the *Reality* of Christianity. It is necessary, therefore, that Men should be put to the Trial thereon; that the Spirit of Christianity should shew itself to them in all its Singularity, in that in which its Reality consists; and that they declare for or against it. In a Word, *Jesus Christ* is set up as a Mark for the Gainsayings of Men from his Birth, from his Conception. A Sword, the *Word* of God, as it is a Scandal, pierces the Soul of those in whom it is brought forth, of those who have in them the *inward Word*, and make it their All; to the End that the Thoughts of many which were hidden in the Bottom of their Hearts should be manifested.

I would willingly address myself to those among Men who are of the Side of *Reason* against that of the *inward Word*, and who, encouraged by the Reasonings

sonings which they can form, follow the established Course of Life. To all that are in this Situation I would willingly say, suffer me to speak to you reasonably and with Freedom. Look on your Course of Life, even that which you call innocent, and with which you are so well satisfied, and judge if it is fit for Man if you are well guided. What, are these then the Things for which God has created you? And is it in order that you should do them that he enlightens you with his Sun, and causes it to turn incessantly round? What, does God consent that you should employ and amuse yourselves as you please, and that in doing your own Will you should rejoice as if you did his, as if you were in Order? Do these Occupations and Amusements require then the different Talents in you that God has placed there? The Capacity for you to be carried to Good as well as that of avoiding Evil, the Capacity of knowing and loving him? Do you not at least perceive that he might have made Creatures for that End only, and that it would have been sufficient to have given you those Talents in Eternity, where you refer their Use? There is no Artificer among you that does not take his Measures better in regard to the Works that he makes, and does not draw more Advantage from them. In what do you think all this will terminate? On whom shall fall the Evil, the Deformity which disfigures the Works of God? Shall it be on him, or shall it be on his Creature? Will it be found, that God puts into the World Creatures unfinished, and without a Task, or will it be that the Creatures which he places here refuse to know their Task and to do it? That, instead of putting themselves under the Direction of his Spirit, they give themselves up to the Spirit of the World, and make
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(themselves) their Lot, their Work, and their Recompence.

But perhaps all this is repaired by what you call *Religion*, or the *Worship of God*; and that the Divine Being, having Regard to the Weakness of Man, contents himself with this Sort of Homage which they render him? What, will the Divinity be pleased with quite another Thing than what he demands, with Things that cost you nothing, and produce nothing for him? Will they content him, and be capable to counterbalance the Evil that you do from Affection, every Thing that dishonours him, and which you continue to do so much the more freely?

Suffer that on this Subject, on the Worship you offer to God, I speak to you with Freedom. In the Division (which, under the Arbitrement of Men made like yourselves, and who were Judges in their own Cause) you have made with God, the Worship you render him at certain Times, and which makes as it were the chief Thing in your Religion, you keep for yourselves all that is good in you, all the Advantages of the Heart; and you give God the rest, Acts of Memory, Repetitions, Confessions, and Songs, what comes from the Head, which God never required of you. This Homage, or this Tribute, you offer to him in Houses built on Purpose; and there Religion has Place. Abroad you are in a Country of Liberty, and scarce does it happen, that Mention is made of God, and one hardly hears his Name pronounced but to affront him. One may almost say, that you celebrate *Games* to his Memory, that 'tis as a *dead God* you honour him. But you would take it ill to be thus talked to, and would take Occasion from thence to shew Zeal for God; for besides the Worship which you render him, and which indeed
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does not come up to those Ideas of Religion which you might have, you readily add to it Zeal, when Occasion offers, when 'tis the Question to condemn those who have other Ideas of what Men owe to God ; Ideas which seem to condemn yours. I must therefore content myself with telling you, that the Divine Being, weary with having nothing from you besides Compliments and Ceremonies, such as would not content you, were other People to give it you, requires something better ; that Reality which you require of one another, and which you owe him much more than one another reciprocally. He requires of you, that you should treat him as a *living God*, who is not far from every one of you. He will be honoured and served by you in the Ordinary of Life, as in the Ordinary of Life he does you Good, and as in the Ordinary of Life *Conscience* (where to every one he makes his Will known) speaks to you. He requires of you to make it your great Affair, your principal Worship, to hear his Voice, and obey it. Afterwards, if you hear your Doctors, you will know how far you ought to have Faith in their Discourses, and what Value you ought to set on them. As you do that which God requires of you in your *Conscience*, he will speak to you more often and more clearly, and he will impute nothing to you on account of any thing he says nothing to you about, on account of that which *Conscience*, an awakened Conscience, shall not have forbid you. If what your Doctors tell you to the Disadvantage of *Conscience* is capable of throwing you into any Diffidence thereon, remember that 'tis to your *Conscience*, and not to their Discourses, that you owe the little or much of good *Faith* that is within you, from whence your real Worth results ; that your Doctors themselves are not valuable but in Proportion as they

they have *Conscience*; and that they don't deserve to be heard when they are known to be without it. Remember that the Remains of good Faith, which are on the Earth, and which makes you find Content and Security there, is the Effect of *Conscience* respected. It is reasonable to believe, that the Means which Divine Wisdom has made use of to place Order in some among Men, would serve to place it in all, and in each, to the Degree it ought to be.

The Times that God has fix'd for to keep himself hidden, and see how Men would act, are ended; for he for whom Times are is coming to gather the Fruit of them; and Men themselves, by the Ideas which they have formed of the hidden Divinity, by Ideas compleat in their Kind, and by all that is the Product of those Ideas, mark the End of Times, and deliver themselves over to the Revolution which brings it on, and which they prepare themselves; as one sees Vapours arise from the Earth, and form Mists, which rising higher, condense into dark Clouds, and make by and by the Lightning and Thunder burst against that Earth which form'd them. The Artifices of Men, thus grown to the full, and after having covered them with Darkness, shall at length produce the Judgments that shall consume them.

Men are not without Religion, without something to which they give that Name, and which exempts them from the Reproach of what they call *Atheism*. One does not hear them say, there is no God, we will have no Religion; but they form a Religion themselves, and figure the Divine Being as they would have him, such as may agree with the Religion which they have made themselves, and to the Course of Life which their Religion has produced. They will have a Deity quite good and pacified toward them before-

fore-hand. Wrath, say they, is incompatible with the Divine Nature. They do not say, that God takes no Notice of us, he does not mind what regards us ; but they think that little Things deserve not his Attention, and so would have those to be little Things that busy them, and make up their Course of Life. They profess to acknowledge a Providence, and, if it is necessary, are ready to agree, that it has dispensed to them the Good and Evil that have happened to them. They are ready to acknowledge it in the past, and in a distant future, in what becomes important enough to deserve its Direction ; but they dispose of themselves, and all that concerns them, both for the present and for the future, that lies open to them, or to which they think they can reach ; the Detail belongs to them. They form Designs on Designs, and excuse Providence from being concerned with them. They curse those whom it makes use of to cross them, and they condemn whatever it dispenses to them that is disagreeable to their Ideas, and strive to alter it. Their Life is spent in wrestling against Providence, and in blaming it. They agree that the Divine Being has made the first Arrangement of what they call second Causes ; there is a Grandeur in having established them, and they admire this Establishment, and conclude, that in doing this he has done enough, and sufficiently filled up the Character of a Deity ; that he ought to leave those Causes to act by themselves, and they are sure he does so. They conclude too, that they sufficiently fill up the Character of Men in acknowledging God on this Footing, and admiring him. In Truth, they employ those second Causes against God himself, against the Testimonies which he gives them of his Anger, by the Scourges wherewith he seeks to frighten them, and make them better.

better. These Things, say they, are natural, and there is nothing in them that should give one Concern more than the rest. But then, in attributing all to Second Causes, they don't exclude the Divine Being. All the good Things of Nature they are willing to hold from his Bounty, but not as receiving them from his beneficent Hand that is open towards them : 'Tis in going backward to the first Arrangement of what has produced them. On this Footing only it is, that they confess he merits their Acknowledgment ; and the Confession they make of it is their Manner of acquitting themselves towards him. As to the rest, to what regards the Soul, they shall be able to provide for it by the Means of *Reason*, which is given to them as a Portion, and which makes the Excellence of Man. They will cultivate it carefully, and it will not fail to supply them with all the Spiritual Goods they want. This *Reason*, which excuses them from any other Guide, they owe to God, who has given it in Inheritance to Mankind. By this Confession too they do him Homage ; and it is very true that, in their Language, Men give God the Glory of all. The Result of all is, that they are Men according to their own Ideas, and not according to the Ideas or Intentions of God ; that they are regular People without being good People, without Sincerity in their Heart ; which is continually to dishonour God, who regards what passes in the Heart, and to honour themselves before Men, who have no Regard but to Appearances, and love to honour those who are like them. In one Word, 'tis to be monstrous in the Eyes of God as much as they set themselves off in their own Eyes and in the Eyes of others. If they have an Idea of something better, the Idea of what ought to make the Order and Excellence of Man, according

cording to the Intention of God, they persuade themselves that this is his Re-establishment reserved for Eternity, and they put off 'till then to tend towards it; or rather think they shall be transported into it at once, as into Eternity itself. The Discourses of those to whom they commit the Care of speaking to them concerning eternal Life are adapted to all this. By an Address which has something wonderful in it they make them easy about it. They condemn Evil in such a Manner that the Men who commit it, and will commit it, the Men condemned by them, are easy to be so; and they are easy with those condemned Men, and prepare with Tranquility to condemn them anew. Evil always condemned, and always committed, unites and binds them together, to make one Body, as Mortar well brayed unites Stones, and binds them together, to make one Building, and makes those enter into it that are not hewn as well as those that are. The Justifications which (by another Wonder of their Skill) cover the Whole, is what whitens the Edifice, and finishes it to give the Appearance which contents Men. This is the Situation in which they are with regard to Religion, and they are very well. They have the Satisfaction to see their Independence, their Revolt against God, set itself forth, and support itself calmly, in a Language which relishes of Order. Never, say they, did Mankind reason better; never was the Age more enlightened: And true it is that Men were never so self-sufficient, that they never made less Account of God. Now the Divinity must either be satisfied with this Situation of Men, and confirm them in it by continuing to do them Good, and presenting it to them on the Footing on which they receive it, or it is necessary he should remedy it, and bring on an Alteration.

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What should we expect from him, tho' he should not explain himself thereon? What should we presume of a God, just in all his Doings, and jealous of his Glory? He is going to change Things, and he will deal with Men consistently with all that Goodness they ascribe to him; but in his Manner, and not in theirs, as a God, whose Ways are not their Ways. He is about to begin by manifesting himself to them more largely than he has yet done, as well by the new Wonders which he is about to work in the Midst of them, as by the new Truths which shall be discovered to them. If they acknowledge him in this Manifestation, if they stand the Tryal to which he is going to put them with regard to the Uprightness of their Intention, and incline towards the Good which he presents them, rather than towards the Pretences they may take up to reject it, they may be satisfied that they conduct themselves well, and Providence will continue to support them, and do them Good; but if they refuse to acknowledge the *New Light*, because it shews them what they are unwilling to see, and if, instead of entering into themselves, and consulting the Sentiments of their own Hearts, the inmost Sentiments, which deceive not, they chuse rather to *reason*, or consult those who reason for them, and whose Decision they know before-hand, Providence shall put an End to their Reign, and they shall perish. Terrible Judgments shall avenge the Divine Goodness despised, and shall cut from off the Earth all those who do not shew themselves Men at least, by some Inclination for the *Light*, and for the Sentiments which the Divinity begets in the Bottom of their Hearts, by some Remains of Uprightness with regard to that which must finally determine between the Truth of God and the Falseness of Man. But especially

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cially the Divine Wrath shall make itself felt by those who call themselves the Pastors of the People, and who, instead of confirming the Testimonies given for their Salvation, shall have confirmed the general Incredulity, by opposing the Testimonies of Truth, and by rendering useless that of Conscience, thro' the determined Silence they observe on that Head, as well as by the Reasonings they oppose to it.

Divine Wisdom is about to throw aside the Veil that hid its Beauty, & let Men see how suitable all that comes from it is for them, and how much it deserves their Attachment to it. Hitherto it has only shewed itself to them in Obscurity, and under an Appearance rather sad than joyful. What it required of Men in this Period went not much further than a Life morally good, and which suited the Gentiles called to Salvation, requiring nothing from them but what was agreeable to that *Reason* which they consulted. It was unnecessary for it to open itself to 'em on what went beyond Reason, or to give them Lights to comprehend it. It has therefore spoken to them accordingly, as at a Distance, and it has made use of the Ministry of those who only knew it at a Distance; or rather it has permitted that those who only knew it after this Manner should devote their Ministry to it. And to draw Advantage from this, it has been pleased to conduct Things in such a Manner that there should be found among them good People, who should declare to Mankind with Power that Truth which these Times required. They were, if not Times of Obscurity, at least Times of a weak and confused Light; such as the Sun casts on the Earth thro' wintry Fogs which it has not the Strength to disperse, because the Earth is not then directly turned towards his Rays. At present 'tis no longer thus; the Times shew themselves more
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favourable. Religion enters on a new Period, or the Period of *Israel*, which is the People of God, in a peculiar Manner, and distinguished from the *Gentiles* by what he requires of them, which sets them, as it were, in Opposition to each other.

Here they walk in all the Obscurity of Faith, and all Sorts of Trials; and this Obscurity is recompensed by a *new Light*, as the Trials which make them die to themselves are recompensed by a new Life, or a new Degree of Life. The *Gentiles* and all the People of the Earth shall partake of it; for the *Israel* of God are made a Blessing to all Men. This Period is like the Spring, when the Sun, darting his Rays more perpendicularly upon the Earth, now turned towards him, disperses the Fogs which covered it, and gives by his gentle Warmth a new Life to all its Plants which have stood out the Rigour of the Winter. But especially Religion itself shall appear with a new Lustre, with a Brightness which shall cause her to be mistaken by those who are ignorant of the Mystery of the different Periods through which it must pass, and know it rather by its Garments and Speech than by itself.

It chuses for its Witnesses Free Men, those animated by the Love which they have for it, and who fear not to expose themselves to all the Contradictions and Crosses which the Testimony of Truth cannot but draw upon them; for it requires them to speak freely to Men, and not fear to attack their dearest Prejudices, the Opinions in which they secure themselves, to excuse themselves from embracing the Truth; and that they conceal nothing from them that is right for them to know. It requires, that its Witnesses should be in an entire Dependence on the Spirit of God, and that they give others an Example of thorough Obedi-

ence. On this Condition he lets them into his Secrets; he speaks in their Ears, as to his Friends; and the secret Things they know from him he will have them publish on the House-Top, in a State of Freedom, which sets them above all domestic Cumber; that is to say, in an entire Disengagement; for the Cares of Life are the last which Men renounce. In this State they fear not to tell them the Truth, be it as hateful to them as it will. Whatever Misfortunes it may draw on them, they must declare to them the Judgments of God, which must put an End to a corrupted World, and make Way for the Kingdom of God, for the happy Times in which God will reign himself, by his *Spirit*, which he shall pour out abundantly on all Flesh, on every Man who is not hardened, and whom the terrible Revolutions (which shall cut off from the Earth those who are so) shall have left to subsist. They ought to declare (on the Part of Divine Wisdom) to Men, that he is ready to assist with his Counsels, and to place in Safety, all those who hearken to him, all those who dare trust themselves to the *Divine Instinct* awakened in them, and to follow it wherever it shall lead them; that the diverse Paths into which they enter shall unite them among themselves as well as with the Divinity to whom they tend; and that in every respect he will take Care of them. He declares that he will not put off to Futurity the Happiness of those who attach themselves to him, and support the Trials thro' which he makes them pass; that their Happiness shall be dated from the present Contentment, Tranquility, and Joy. Assurance and Resolution are the Gifts which he has in Store for them, and he shall extend even into their Minds that Rectitude of Heart which renders them agreeable

greeable in his Eyes. Right Sense, a grand Sense, is counted among the good Things which he has ready for them. Diversion itself, what can rejoice Man descended from the Throne of his Gravity and entered into Humanity, the Friend of Infant Simplicity, shall find its proper Place with him, and contribute to render him happy. The good Genius, which conducts him, and puts him onward to every Thing that is convenient for him, shall be pleased to make him divert himself, as well as to make him act seriously, and perform his Task, and shall not disdain to direct him in his Diversions; as a Wind that is favourable to a Vessel on a Voyage not only swells her Sails, and causes her to go onward, but also plays in her Colours hoisted for that End. Wisdom condescends further to the Taste of Men born on the Earth, and sensible of its good Things. *The Earth (says she) was consecrated to me from its Foundation: I will take Possession of what belongs to me, and cause my Friends to enjoy it. I will accommodate myself, in some sort, to this Habitation, and will place among my Gifts the good Things of the Earth. I will rectify in Men their Taste for what Nature presents them. I will that they hold them as from my Hand; that they think themselves obliged for the true Enjoyment of them to me, and not to Nature that produces them; only I require of them, that they look upon the good Things of this World as the least valuable of all those with which I gratify them. In turning themselves principally toward the others, in preferring them always to those, they shall suck out by this Means all the Good that is really in them, and shall find, with Astonishment, how much the Satisfaction of the Soul surpasses that of the Body; how much happier Man is, by a well disposed Inside, than by the Pleasure with which the Senses furnish him.*

Wisdom addresses herself to Men that are upright and courageous. 'Tis those who are suitable to her; and whom she chuses, to do them Good. But she offers to render so such who are not so as yet, but who are willing to become so. As she encreases and refines the Uprightness of those who are in some Measure Possessors of it, even so she does not disdain those in whom the Uprightness they have received is, as it were, buried under all that the Spirit of the World has made them receive of foreign. Under the Course of an irregular Life, and devoted to Pleasures and Libertinism, she makes her Call reach even to them; and there is a Pleasure in serving her in this Respect. And just now to address myself to them.

You whom Youth and the Temptations to which you have been exposed have seduced, and thrown out of the Way, but who in your Wanderings have preserved some Respect for that Uprightness, that Fear of God, which you have remarked in others: You who only know Religion by what you have heard told of it by People who, for the most part, know it not themselves, and whose Discourses you disdain: You, in short, who dare shew your Disgust to the False, to what is affected, and which these who give it forth have only at second-hand, perhaps you may have a Relish for the True, for what runs from the Fountain. Let it come to you, and do not resist the Truth that seeks you. The Kind of Life in which you are engaged does not render you happy, or if there are Moments in which you seem so to yourselves, you are sufficiently sensible that this Happiness is not lasting; that it is not the true Happiness of Man to stupify yourselves. On that Account you run from Pleasure to Pleasure, and from Amusement to Amusement, or you lay out for yourselves Occupations which you regard

gard as something more real, and which should repair the rest. It would be insupportable to you to be obliged to live by yourselves, and cast your Eyes on what touches you more nearly than your Business or your Pleasures. You find there are Times when Man comes to himself, and when his Disorder makes itself felt by him in a Manner so much the more lively as, in avoiding to see it, he has suffered it to strike deep Roots in his Heart. And you have no Difficulty to comprehend that Man must seek his Contentment in Order, and in that Tranquility which Order produces. Wisdom is ready to make you enter into it, and she requires nothing else of you but to follow the Voice of *Conscience* and the *Instinct*, which should guide you. In the Midst of your Pleasures it has spoken to you, and it has not been discouraged when you have refus'd to hearken to it. Your Excesses persisted in, against its Advices, have only sadden'd it, and reduced it to Streights; they have not stifled it, as Falseness and Hypocrisy stifle it in those who make a Mock of all that is most holy and respectable. These are the Enemies of Religion, the Enemies which she flies, and to whom Divine Wisdom either speaks not at all, or speaks to in vain. But she speaks to you who have never mocked her, and have served with some Generosity and Uprightness the Spirit of the World, to which you have given yourselves up. Accept what she offers you, go over to the Service of God, to whom you belong, and you shall find to what Degree he is generous and beneficent; how much he is above all the dry and narrow Ideas that Men have given you of him; how ready he is to receive those that return to him, let them be in what Disorder they may. He has made Man, and he knows what he is capable of: He does not forget him in his Corruption, not even

in an enormous Corruption. The more or less of Corruption in Man does not make more or less in the Divine Mercy. Quite on the contrary, the Divinity takes Delight to draw Man out of a great Mire, out of a deep Gulph, in order to make himself beloved strongly by him, and to prefer those who love him strongly to others for whom he has done less, and who love him less.

Man, let him be what he will, does not draw his Worth from the Kind of Life he has chosen, and which he refers to himself; let him honour himself little or much, by all that with which he sets himself off, that is not very important; for no Honour is due to him, and if all was to be seen that passes in the Inside of him no Honour would be given him. But it imports him to honour God, whose Workmanship he is, and to enter into a Disposition to honour him much, to give himself up to him, to confide in his Bounty, and by that Means give him room to exercise it towards him, to make it shine forth to the Eyes of those who know him not, and by that Means to draw them to him. All Men are as uncultivated Lands with respect to him, when he has a Mind to sow his Word in them; and if the decent Part of the World, regular People, have great Advantages over others, it is respecting Society much more than with regard to Religion. The Thistles and Briars with which an Estate may be covered do not much lessen the Value of it to him who has a Mind to cultivate it, and the good Herbs that may be found there as little augment it. The Plough, without Distinction, overturns both one and the other, and the sole Goodness of the Soil constitutes its Value. You who are Fallow Grounds suffer yourselves to be made Fields, and you shall perhaps be of better Report,
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& more valued by the Master, than those Fields which have been a long while cultivated, and have been worn out in the Hands of bad Farmers. The Difficulty will be great to bring regular Men to this. The People of Merit, who by their Virtues, and what has the Publick Approbation, draw on them the Eyes of Men, and rest in this State, as People who are entered into Order. They make Religion enter in as a Part of their Merit, but rather to raise the rest than to make the Ground of their Character, which is what renders them culpable more than it justifies them. It is certain that what is called Merit in the World gives to those that have it an Advantage above the common Sort of Men; but it is not for them to set themselves out with their fine Qualities, to dazzle those that look at them, and to make them idolize them. 'Tis that they may have something gloriously to sacrifice to God, in renouncing them all, to please him: 'Tis that they may prefer his Approbation to that of Men. For to renounce one's Vices is an equivocal Thing, and one may do it thro' Self-love, or in order to please the World, which indeed makes more Account of Virtue than Vice; but to renounce what the World esteems, (and which gives us Occasion to esteem ourselves) to prefer to this Esteem the secret Approbation of God has nothing in it that is equivocal; it can be nothing but the Desire of pleasing him that can have this Effect upon us, and there is nothing but God himself that can give us this Desire.

This is, without Contradiction, the true Merit, by so much the greater as it triumphs over the other, and raises itself on its Ruins, and by so much the more agreeable to God, as the Examples which People of Distinction give Mankind have more Weight with them than those of ordinary People.

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But, independently of this, the true Merit has its Character, and, without endeavouring to impose on one's self, 'tis impossible to mistake it. The least one can suppose of it is, that it must be suitable to Man, thro' the whole Extent of his Destiny, and that it must not leave him at his going out of the World, when he ought to begin to find his Account in it, and enjoy the Fruits of his Labour. Man being placed in Time as in the Road to Eternity, he ought to set a Value on the Things he finds on his Road, not according to what they are in themselves, but by the Relation they have to him. He ought to look on every Thing as an Obstacle that stops and hinders him in his Journey, and tell himself that the true Man of Merit is he who, instead of amusing himself, and bounding himself by Time, has the Courage to go beyond it, and regard Amusements for what they are, and to reckon among Amusements every Thing that is not comprehended in his Task, every Thing that Providence has not charged him with, and which others would do if he did not; especially he should remember that it is essential to true Merit to draw on him that has it, Contradictions, and in no sort Approbations; to make him worthy by Crosses from the Part of those who live but for Time, and to whom what relates to Eternity appears either as a Folly, or else as a Subject of Vexation. God will have it so in favour of those who prefer Eternity to Time. He dispenses Crosses to them, and Condemnations, because they are Crosses and Condemnations supported for the Love of him, that he will reward in Eternity. He cannot recompence what had for its Motive the Approbation of Men. Those who have sought it have attained their End, and have justly nothing to demand beyond it. But much less can he be wanting to those
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who have had Himself for their End ; his Will shall be agreeable to them, and make their Happiness in Eternity, so far as it was agreeable to them in Time, and so far as they have consented it should make their Merit.

Those who in setting themselves off by Virtues, by Qualities which they suppose to be as agreeable to God in Proportion as they are approved by Men, deceive themselves, and do not give Attention to the End they have in View, and in which God admits no Partnership. Once more, 'tis the End and Motives that decide all ; and 'tis their Duty to examine themselves thereon, and not to believe the Opinions which others have of them rather than the Testimony of their own Hearts where their Motives are discovered. The World imposes on him who would impose on it, and the Cheat we would put on others easily falls back on ourselves. There is nothing but the *true Light*, the *Divine Word*, which speaks to us in the Bottom of the Heart, that can enlighten us in our Passage thro' the World, and preserve us from the Turnings that present themselves to us, and among which that of the establish'd Merit is dangerous by its plausible Appearance. 'Tis a Way which seems right to Man, even to him who is in Humanity, and who has his Eyes open to what he sees before him ; but the Issue thereof leads to Death, which he does not see.

The Rich Man, who was cloathed with Purple and fine Linnen, and who rejoiced splendidly every Day, what, in short, did he do more than is done by People of the World, who are called People of Merit ? He is interred too ; after his Death Men speak of him with Eulogiums ; they make him a Model of Perfection, and place him in Paradise ; while no one says a Word of the poor *Lazarus*, in whom there
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was nothing remarkable but his Ulcers, and whom the Rich Man, as well as others, disdained, altho' *Lazarus* apply'd to him for Support in his Poverty. But with all the Praises which Men gave this Rich Man, as much a Man and a Son of *Abraham* as he may be, he is in Hell, in a Place of Torments; from thence he only sees afar off *Lazarus* in the Bosom of *Abraham*, in that sweet Peace which is the Recompence of the Bitternesses of Faith supported by Patience. He reckon'd to have got there at once, and he is yet a great Way off.

This Parable of the Rich Man interr'd, and who is unjustly call'd the *wicked* Rich Man, and of *Lazarus* covered with Ulcers, and despised, is worthy the Attention of People of Merit, and relates to them more nearly than may appear at first View. 'Tis to them that it properly relates. But this Man who here represents them, and is shewn to them in Torments, is not easily known by their Eyes, no more than they, thro' the Appearances they assume, are to be known by the Eyes of others. In the mean while they need have no Difficulty to comprehend that this Parable is more extensive than appears at first; and 'tis to them who distinguish themselves from the Common of Mankind that we are permitted to talk a Language which the Common of Mankind would reject, if we were to talk to them in it. It is certain that the sumptuous Outside of a Rich Man is not here the only Thing in Question, no more than the Poverty oppos'd to those Riches, and the divers Circumstances of those Things. External Riches are a Figure of internal Riches, and the Ulcers, which serve to cleanse the Body, shadow out something analogous in regard to the Soul; a Purification that gives strange Appearances to those in whom it is at Work, and distinguishes them for the per-

perfect Opposites to the People of Merit. The most understanding Men would not know their Friends in this Condition, and would condemn instead of comforting them. The Dogs which lick these Ulcers are those who cleanse the Outside, and to whom we should not abandon those *Lazarus's*. But Providence, to render their Evils supportable, will make even the Dogs kind to them, and by that Means confound those Men who abandon them. He that is here spoken of, far from discharging his Duty to them, thinks of nothing but to appear in his Purple before those who admire him, and to set forth his eminent Qualities, which impose on Mankind, to take Pleasure in himself, in his fine Linnen, in his own Righteousness, which renders his Dress compleat. Every Day he makes his abundant Merit shine forth, and has a Pleasure in making the most of it, and in making himself easy thereon. 'Tis himself that he regales, and to whom he gives the Honour of all the Good in his Possession, and not to God, to whom he ought to refer it.

It is necessary that this false Satisfaction in a Man, in a Son of *Abraham*, should be expiated before he can get to his Father, and rejoice in having practised the Vertues which make him acknowledge him for his Son. The Part of his Body in which he suffers most is his Tongue, which happens to him as much for having his own Glory in View, in the Words which he has spoken, as for having eaten deliciously.

But in his Sufferings (which served as a Purification to him, as the Ulcers did to *Lazarus*) *Abraham* comforts him, and owns him for his Son; and he himself (who does not quite lose his Courage) speaks to him of another Father yet. 'Twas to the House of this common Father, that he would have *Lazarus*
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sent; that Part of the Earth where Men worship God as if they were his Children.

Christendom is this House; the Rich Man has there Five Brethren, and he would have certified to them the Truth, which teaches the renouncing of Appearances, as well as the Pleasures, of Life, so far as we make it the Ordinary of Life; that they might know the Condition in which he was, in order that they might not come into that Place of Torment.

Charity makes a Part of his Character, and this Circumstance clearly demonstrates, that 'tis a Man of Merit, and by no means an ill Man, that is here represented to us. Even in his Sufferings he is concerned for the People of his Order; he knows how far they are from mistrusting the Lot that awaits them at the End of Life, and he would preserve them from the Torments which he endures. Their Number, the Number of Six Brethren, is a Designation of as many Periods marked out to Christianity, in which this Sort of Riches is look'd on as what is most perfect. It is well that those whom this Parable regards should know that they are arrived at the Sixth Period, and that their Order shall not reach to the Seventh. Another Sort of Merit shall reign then. Simplicity, and the Fear of God extended thro' the whole Life, shall be acknowledged as constituting the Perfection of Man; and those who bring many to Righteousness shall then be the People of Merit. This is the Merit we wish them. As they are, 'tis confessed, they are what the World has of Best and most Beautiful; but the World shall perish in what it has of Fine and Estimable as well as what it has of Bad. And it shall be found that true Merit consists in not being a Man of this World, but in daring to give ourselves up to Religion, and to what the *Divine Instinct* requires of us, with-

without fearing what may be the Consequence from Men ; as Merit and Courage, according to the World, consists in daring to do every Thing that has the Approbation of Men, without being afraid of what may happen from it with regard to God. The Opposition that is between God and the World is a decided Truth. What is great in the Eyes of Men is an Abomination before God. With this the Brethren of this Rich Man have *Moses* and the Prophets (Conscience within and the Witnesses of Truth without), which will tell them all they want to know. 'Tis their Business to give Attention to them, and not to expect more convincing Testimonies, or that they should be addressed to them in a more particular Manner.

Men are not Men but by Religion, by the Heart filled with the Fear of God, and Uprightness. 'Tis the Heart, says Divine Wisdom, that I require of them ; without that I have no Good to do them. I will prepare it for my Habitation, and they shall be infinitely Gainers by giving it me. In the State in which it is, empty of Sentiments, and of all that makes the Contentment of Man, and filled with that only which tends to give Appearances, it is of no Use to them ; it languishes under the Yoke of their own Reason, to which they have subjected it no less than under that of the Passions, from whence Reason should guard it ; and instead of serving them as a Retreat from the Evils that surround them, it is a Place of Torment, which sends them back to those Evils. Inquietude, Trouble, Fear, Sollicitude, Suspicion, Hatred, and Vengeance are lodged there, and banish Man from himself. Turn'd Wanderer, he runs here and there, and knows not what he seeks ; he throws himself into Occupations that are not agreeable to him

him, and into Amusements that cannot tranquilize him. Sometimes he gives himself up to Libertinism and Irreligion; at others, to the Opinions and Imaginations of Men, and to all that they give him for Religion. Every Thing that flatters and promises him either present Happiness or future Salvation he adopts; as a Man, afflicted with a long Distemper, gives himself up to those who talk to him of a Cure, and cry up their Medicines, and by that Means compleats his Destruction.

I am ready to change this unhappy State, says Divine Wisdom, and I require nothing from Man besides that Confidence which he is not tired with giving to those who have so long amused him. I will drive from his Heart the Troop of Enemies that lays it waste. I will restore Tranquility there, and I will make for Man a Home, a Place where he may take Refuge, and find that which to no Purpose he seeks without, Peace, which shall stand him in stead of all Things, and which puts an End to all his Inquietudes, in unloosening what is divine in him, by setting at Liberty the *Instinct*, which is, as it were, in Captivity there, and cannot do its Office. I will assign him the Work which is convenient for him, the Task of every Day; to his Labour shall succeed sweet Repose, to which at present he is as much a Stranger as to the Work; and the Work itself I will render easy and agreeable to him. I will make those Sentiments to grow up in him which nourish the Confidence I require from him, and which excuses him from having Recourse to Reasonings, from which he draws no Advantage. I will make him recover the Relish for simple Truth, which Men had caused him to lose, by their Compositions, by their Productions of the Head, which only present (to those who seek after Men) a
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vain Knowledge, which nourishes not ; but my Truth shall nourish him, and make him prosper. Knowledge itself, true Knowledge, shall not be wanting ; a Thousand and a Thousand new Truths shall arise in the Heart where I inhabit. They shall cover it, as the flowery Herb covers the green Meadows in Spring-time ; and my new Abode in the Heart of my Friends shall indeed produce the Spring in them. From thence, as from a blessed Seed, it shall spread itself over the Earth ; Men shall know the Truth which the false Sciences had darkened and made to disappear, and I will bring them back to the Simple, to the Divine, from whence their Attachment to what is from Man had set them at a Distance. I will bring on the Earth happy Times, in which Honesty and Simplicity shall take place of Fraud and Artifice ; Times in which Men shall be valued by the Heart, which they shall cultivate, and which shall furnish them, like a happy Soil, with good Things in Abundance, without their being obliged, as in Times past, to heap up borrowed and false Riches, to make for themselves apparent Virtues, which neither have God for their Principle or End : Especially I will do them Good, by teaching them to converse with the Divinity, and to speak to him in the Language of the Heart, which he likes, and for which they have substituted that of the Head, which God disdains if the Heart is not there, and which, for the most Part, the Heart itself disdains, and refuses to enter into it.

From henceforward, therefore, let Men turn towards me ; let them enter into Uprightness, into the Situation in which they will prosper ; as People go into a pure Air, which more than any Thing contributes to restore those who are weak. Let them give up their Hearts, which I require, and where all the

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Good

Good which God ordains for them must be begotten, to the End that after I have ploughed it up, and prepared it to bring forth, I may sow it. Let them from henceforward be attentive to what they are told by the *Divine Instinct*, by whose Voice I speak to them. All the Time they resist me is lost to them, and they themselves will be lost, if they persist in resisting me; for they are no longer Times in which the Divinity, who was but little known, excused in Men their Lukewarmness to do his Will, their languishing Religion, and their Life spent in Ease and Slumber. The Light begins to shine upon them, and God requires of them the Works of the Light and of the Day, Uprightness, especially an Uprightness that extends to Evil as well as to Good, to the End that the Good may prosper and strengthen in them, and that the Evil may grow weak and be lost. Uprightness makes the main Thing in Man; whatever else he may aim at will not repair the Want of Uprightness. This Defect excludes all those in whom it is not found from all the Advantages ordained for Humanity, and from the happy Times in which it must flourish on the Earth.

Men are offended with the low Appearances of the *Instinct* within them, and at its mute Language, and they form an Idea of the Divine as of something pompous, and which carries all before it, in which they deceive themselves, and confound the Times of the Lowness of Jesus Christ, in whom all the Divine is center'd, with those of that Glory which his Abasement produces. They even shew a Forgetfulness of that external Christianity they make Profession of. We must put them in Mind that they are engaged to adore an Infant, an Infant born in a Stable, among Brute Animals, & lain in a Manger. And perhaps this
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one might help them to observe some Relation between this mysterious Birth (so uncommon in its Circumstances) and what is required of them with regard to the *Divine Instinct*. Might not the Heart of Man be considered as this Stable, a Place to be cleansed; and the familiar domestic Animals which lodge together there, might not they represent the kind and beneficent Affections of well-disposed Persons in whom this Birth may take Place? The Manger in which the Child was lain, may it not shadow out the same good Disposition, a Disposition to preserve and nourish the good Affections which Providence has dispensed to us, and which tends also to nourish the Child itself?

This Child in the Manger of the Heart, is it not the Nourishment of the Soul? And is not the *Divine Instinct* the same; that on which the Soul subsists? Is it not the Life of the Soul? This Infant grew, and became a Man, and those who adored him in his mean Estate had no Reason to repent of it.

This Man, a Man as yet without Appearance, and rejected by the greatest Part of those who knew him, did wonderful Things. And, at the Time when those who followed him least expected it, he changed Form, and appeared to them sparkling with Glory. It will be thus with the *Instinct* that is in us. Let us respect it whilst it is but a Child, and speaks to us a mute Language. This Language is sufficient to turn us from Evil and carry us to Good; to determine us toward the Path which we ought to tread, and make us do our Task. Let us do what it requires of us. Let us afford the *Instinct* its Nourishment, which is to do the Will of him from whom it comes, and it will not be always a Child: It will grow in Stature and Comeliness, and its Obscurity will not last long. The Time will come

when we shall see him in his Glory, and when he shall enlighten us for the Knowledge of all Truth. Even Miracles shall not be wanting. The *Divine Instinct* shall operate in us (if he finds Faith there) all that which he (who was outward all that the *Instinct* in us is inwardly) wrought outwardly. All these Miracles, which were Figures of what he will work inwardly, at his second Coming in Spirit, and which is as extensive as that which was in the Flesh (in a Time when Parables and Figures had Place) was bounded. He wrought those Miracles in a very strange Manner, since he declares those happy who saw them, and were not offended in him; and he shall continue this Manner working. Let us know the Messiah by the Offence which Men take up against him, even those who are otherwise good People, as well as by the Good he does to those who have the Faith he requires of them, and whom he comes to assist. Let us acknowledge the Wonders themselves which the Messiah operates for Divine, by the Scandal which accompanies them, and which drives away the Prophane.

The Reason of Man, always ready to exalt itself, and to go beyond its Sphere (and always blind when it goes beyond it), cannot but rebel against what is Divine, and condemn it; for the Divine is always opposite to the Reason, which exalts, and always tends towards its Condemnation. The Divinity, supremely free, and whose Will is the first Source of all Good, has confined himself within no Rules, not even within those that he would seem to have imposed on himself. He is pleased to go beyond them, to confound Men, who would set them as Bounds to him. By this Means there will be a continual War between their proud Reason and the Divine Truth; and Man cannot have a Relish for the Truth, for the Divine,
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but by renouncing all Reasonings thereon, by renouncing them for a Time, and by giving up himself to the Sentiments of his Heart, and to that Simplicity to which the Divine is adapted, by putting himself in an entire Dependence on the Divine Will. This Will is manifested to him by the *Divine Instinct*, by that which every one is called to hearken to in his own Heart. The outward Testimony will exhort Men to hearken to it in themselves, as at the Time in which he spoke to Men outwardly. A Voice from Heaven told them they should hear him outwardly, and they shall comprehend that, as heretofore he came in the Flesh, he yet comes; that he comes to dwell in Man, and renew him by his Word. This is the Mystery of the latter Times, the great Mystery, agreeing perfectly with the Nature of God and the Nature of Man; and, declared as it is in the Scriptures, it is astonishing that Men who profess to believe the Scriptures, and who like to reflect on what agrees or disagrees, should be ignorant of it. He who knows this Truth knows the one Thing necessary, and does not much trouble himself about the rest; even he refuses to know Jesus Christ according to the Flesh, or, as the latter manifests him to the Reason, as he has formerly known him; he reckons this Knowledge among what is old and past, and he sticks to what is new, to what is Spirit and Life, and proves efficacious in him for his Renovation. If an Apostle of Jesus Christ hath declared himself thus far, for this inward Knowledge, it should seem that the Divinity of the *Instinct*, of the Word of God pronounced in Man (and which indeed ought to be acknowledged as God) is sufficiently proved. But those among Men who are the Opposite to the Apostles of Jesus Christ, those who under his Name give forth their own Words, know not this

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Mystery;

Mystery; for Flesh and Blood, Reason and the Inclinations it favours, give not the Knowledge of it. We must receive it from above.

They do in our Days what the Teachers of Old did; they build, they pretend to erect the Temple of God, and they reject that which is the principal Stone of the Corner. 'Tis his Lot to be mistaken and rejected, and in this Sense too Jesus Christ is the same To-day, Yesterday, and forever, as long as it shall be in question to know him by Faith, and not by Sight.

The Time for the Manifestation of the Wonders of Divine Wisdom is come; for he for whom they are performed, the Marvellous himself, comes, and is about to manifest himself, and Men shall find to what Degree they are deficient in Faith as well as in Discernment, in the Relish of what comes to them from Divine Wisdom. His Book, the Scriptures, which must be a Book of Wonders, and which hitherto has been in Obscurity, is about to come out of it and appear in that Splendor which befits it, but which does not agree with the Eyes of Men clouded with Darkness; that Wisdom which has dictated it will take off the mean Dress that has covered it, and hid its Secrets from prophane Eyes. In the magnificent Habit, which was not seen under the other, it is about to dazzle and surprize those who handled and abused it, the Doctors, who had seized it for themselves, and darken'd it for others. And Men shall see what has been the Knowledge of their Doctors, and what Service they have been of to them. Instead of making Use of the Testimonies of this Divine Book, as far as it was understood by them, simply to confirm Men in Good and drive them from Evil, they have made Use of it chiefly to frame the Science which they call Divinity; a Texture of Dogmas and Opinions

ons which the Spirit of God had never in View, which the Patriarchs, the Prophets, Jesus Christ, and his Apostles have never known, and what has done Men all the Damage that their Reason, armed with the Letter, which kills, could do them. They have drawn from the Scriptures wherewith to trouble and frighten the Simple, the Peaceable of the Earth, whom the inward Attractions subdue to the Will of God more than to them. On the other Side, they have made them serve to encourage and strengthen the rash ones, (those in whom the Spirit of the World exalts itself) and to unite them in Interest with themselves. Instead of making the most of the Truths which this Book, by its whole Tenor, establishes, and resting upon them in their Teachings; instead of making Men comprehend the Necessity of chusing between God and the World, of fearing God in Singleness of Heart and doing his Will, they have fixed on all Sorts of Particularities, which make Men lose Sight of those great Truths. They have found out Shifts, Reasons which in an indirect Manner excuse from the Fear of God, and the Necessity of renouncing the World; and, after having made Science their All, they have made it the Whole of Men to be instructed. They have heaped up out of the Divine Writings what might justify Men who are become their Children, and made as they are, or who are converted as they are converted; and they have been prevailed on to continue their Conversions, and no longer to be frightened at a justified Course of Life. They have also been insensibly led to set a Value on a Religion that justifies them, to stick by this Justification, and to drop the rest, to hear it spoken of, and to look upon it, as made for that End.

But the Doctors have more especially discredited the Divine Writings, in making them look on them, not as Writings whose Obscurities included Depths, Mysteries which surpassed their Reach, and which should one Day discover themselves, but as Writings understood by them, and which contained Things like all those which they relate of it. The Words of Jesus Christ, whose Depth extends thro' all Time, and beyond the Duration of Heaven and Earth, they have bounded them, as far as was in their Power, to the then Times, and have applied them to trifling Circumstances, agreeable to their Knowledge. By this, and by giving them that Usage they give to the Spirit that has produced them, by correcting and explaining them in their Way, they have made them like their own Productions, and exposed them to the Ridicule of Libertines, as well as to the Dislike of reasonable People. As Divine Writings, which are not to be affronted with Impunity, they are about to revenge themselves for the Wrong which has been so long done them; they are about to bring forth against those rash and impious Men the piercing Testimony which they hide under the Letter, as a sharp Sword is hid under the Scabbard that incloses it. On the other Side, they are about to rejoice the Upright and Simple, and to be the Delight of those who love the Truth, and who are in Expectation of its Appearance, of those who shall have dared to despise the plausible Productions of Men, and to prefer to them the still Language of the *Divine Instinct*, and the secret Sentiments of their Hearts. What Wisdom, what Depth, shall they find in the Divine Writings! What Justness quite divine, and which extends itself even to the least Expressions! What Delicacy shall they see shine forth in them! What new Taste for the True, for the

the Divine, shall they not draw from them! How great shall be the common Astonishment when they see that it is neither the Wise nor Understanding who read and explain them, but simple and ignorant People, who have more of the Child than the Doctor! that such understand those Riddles with Ease, and as if they explained themselves to them. But the Divine Writings shall especially prove themselves so, and surprise Men in presenting them an exact History of what must happen in the Times on which we enter, the latter Times; or rather a History of all that which is ready to come to pass, and which is rendered considerable by this very Circumstance, that it is found written and declared before-hand in the Book of the Divinity.

Man shall then know if he wants Attention to what regards them; whether he disdains to cast his Eye on what they call little Things, and which, collected together, make a frightful Enormity. His Book resembles a Concave Mirror, which, by Reflection, represents in Little what exists in Great; and Men who see clear shall put it to this Use. But it has yet another, which is not less considerable; it will also be found to be a Burning Mirror, which, by concentrating the Rays of the Sun, sets fire to what is opposite to it. Then when they shall see the burning Point make the Earth its Focus, they shall know what the *Divine Instinct* is; for 'tis by its Means that the Scripture shall be understood; and further, 'tis by its Means that it shall be accomplished; that the Threatnings as well as Promises which it contains shall be fulfilled.

Then shall they comprehend the Use of this Book, how much its Workmanship surpasses that of the Books which Men make. What Effect will it have with regard to all those Works of Emptiness which amuse

use and busy Mankind ! What Disdain will it beget for that vile Heap called Erudition ! What Contempt for the Science which they reverence as Holy, and which for the most part served only to extinguish the Spark of Holiness in them, as well as to make them not know Holiness where it really was ! How great shall be their Indignation when they shall see that what they have made them look upon as Light was what principally hindered them from seeing clear, and covered them with Darkness ! that Things of no Importance, and which they had no Business with, have been revered by them for many Ages ; and that during all this Time these very Things have laid them waste by the Divisions they have occasioned and kept up among them !

In the Times on which we enter (in the Times of Truth, and which shall afford Light, in order that Men may be righteous to accomplish, and not to know merely) false Science, the vain Imaginations which Leisure and Blindness have framed, the Productions of Darkness, which have turned the Day into Night, shall disappear, and shall run to hide themselves in the Heads of the Learned ; as Bats, when the Night is past, go to hide themselves in those Ruins from whence they came out. If in those Times a Doctor should dare to appear abroad with his Orthodoxy, he would be a mere Spectacle to Men, and they would laugh at him as much as at meeting a Watchman who should appear in broad Day in his Night Equipage, with his brown Bill, and lighted by his Lanthorn.

There is another Book, says Divine Wisdom, which is not less exact than the Scripture ; it is more general and more wonderful still ; and yet Men who have it in their Keeping, and turn it over incessantly,
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have never perceived that it was a Book, that they were Instructions as well as Pictures. This Book is Nature written in living Characters. Divine Wisdom has formed them with her own Hand, and she has hid all her Secrets under the Shell of the Letter, where those stop who cannot read. The Scripture frequently quotes this Book by the Comparisons it draws from it, and by which it confirms it, if it wants Confirmation. But it is striking by itself, and it has a Character of Divinity, which distinguishes it for what it is. It shall ravish with Admiration all those among Men who have their Eyes open, and who shall have been instructed in the School of Wisdom, and it shall give them some Idea of the Wonders of Creation, as well as of the Excellence of Man, for whom they were created, and who has a Capacity to comprehend them.

Those who hitherto have been looked upon as capable (and who have only that Capacity which is acquired in the Schools where themselves are the Doctors) have reasoned on the Outside of this Book, have set themselves to discover the Structure of it, which does not regard them; and what might regard them, its Contents, in which its chiefly wonderful, they have taken no Pains to discover, nor have ever considered if there was any thing there to be discovered. Their Reasoning has not led them to conclude, that it was inconsistent with the Divine Wisdom to have given Man the Desire of knowing, and the Capacity of unfolding, without at the same Time presenting him Objects which should answer to this Gift, Things to consider and to unfold, and that the Wonders of Nature, the Riddles with which she presents us, might be useful to this End.

The Use which they have made of it, by enjoying
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all they could enjoy, has contented them, and they have not once thought that it was not probable that Divine Wisdom should have made so many Things only that they might enjoy them, that they might satisfy the irregular Desires of Man; that he should have made them with Care, and in a Manner which shewed Design, without his having any, without his being determined by some End worthy himself, to make Things in the Way they are made.

The Doctors have got no more Knowledge by the Use they have made of Nature than the Rats acquire by the Books they eat. They affect the Knowledge of Divine Things, and would have Men instructed by them, whilst they know not Natural Things, which are an Image of the Divine, made to lead us to them, and which Divine Wisdom has set before our Eyes for that End.

They are ignorant that all that Nature produces, and even what Men produce, when Divine Wisdom directs them, is the Figure of invisible Things which it concerns Men to know, and which are perfectly represented by it; that this alone agreed with Nature, and could settle that Relation between it and Man which there ought to be; that it was necessary there should be such a Difference as a good and bad Use of Things, to the End that Man might be able to make a Choice, that they might have something to make a Distinction between them and the Brutes, who enjoy Nature without knowing it. The Doctors are ignorant in what consists the Excellence of Nature, or what makes the Excellence of Scripture, because they do not enquire of that Divine Wisdom whence Nature and the Scriptures proceeded, because they have no Mind to be obliged to her for their Knowledge.

That Uprightness, that Fear of God, that renouncing

cing our own Sense, which prepare Man for the Instructions that come from her, are Preparatives that are disagreeable to them. They apply to that which is acquired with less Trouble. They ask one another as blind Men may, and their Knowledges are such as blind Men may acquire. The same Blindness that produces and makes them be given, causes that they are received and valued. It is also true that Nature is not the Book of the Doctors. 'Tis the Book of Man, of him who consents that God should speak to him. It is writ in no particular Language, but in one that all Men may understand; and if in the Times on which we enter all do not understand it, if all Men see not the Signification of the Mysteries of Nature, they shall at least be explained to all. This Explication shall make them comprehend that there is a Divine Wisdom, whose Operations are extended over all Things, and fill the Universe; that there is nothing, without Exception, where it does not shew itself, and speak to the Man who understands its Language. The Intelligence which discovers those Mysteries, the Understanding which is in the Heart of Man, of him who is in Dependence on the *Divine Instinct*, is infinitely superior to Reason, which depends on the Organs of the Body, and lets itself be corrupted by the natural Inclination.

They will then comprehend that the Fear of God is the Source of all Good to Man, of all Knowledge, as well as all Virtue. You who take Pleasure in Reading, and who, in short, must be disgusted to find constantly the same Things only disposed in a different Manner: You who seek for something new, and to whom it is promised: You Men of Sense, see your Books which Wisdom has prepared for you, Nature, the Scripture, and your own Heart (where the Understanding

derstanding of the Whole is to be met with), and which in itself (by the Principles of Truth which are there) is a Book as wonderful as the others. These Books will satisfy you entirely when you have the *Divine Instinct* for a Teacher. He directs those in the Search after Truth, who are willing to be conducted by him, as well as in what relates to Life, when 'tis to Action and Life that they devote the Truth, and when they have the Courage to despise what only amuses and leads to vain Speculations.

Let us from henceforward begin to stick by him, and drop the Doctors, with their merhodical Wordiness and reasoned Pedantries, all those who have nothing to say to Men, all those who under promising Titles only write thro' Restlessness and Vainglory, and whose Readers are their Dupes.

In losing the Taste they have formed in us, the Taste for Trifles as well as what does not concern us, in getting rid of this Taste in us, as a worse Thing than the false Knowledge that nourishes it, let us form in its stead the Taste for what is real and relates to us, for the simple Truth, for all that is suitable for Man. This Disposition adorns Man as much by itself as by the Knowledge which relates to it. If after this you read the Writings of Men, it will be the Writings of those who are truly Men; Books which have a Relation to those others, and which, by exact Explanations, will render the understanding them easy to you.

All true Good comes from me, says Wisdom. I teach Men to honour God, and to depend upon him; and 'tis I that unite them among themselves, and place in their Society the Order that strengthens it. How is it possible they should mistake me so far as to take a Stranger for me, who dishonours the Divinity, by the unworthy Ideas she gives them of him, and
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who troubles Society by the Divisions which she sows in it, and by the Value which she causes them to set on Opinions which in Truth are worth nothing, and which in the same Manner only serve to keep Division alive? Her Doctrine is borrowed, and her Words are artificial; a false Eloquence, where the Heart has no Share, amuses those who are called together to hear her. How can they attribute all this to me? Or, if it is I, and not a Stranger, that lavish on them all those Instructions on which they feed, how comes it that I should be so different from myself, that Men should differ on my Account more than on any other, not with regard to the Good and Evil which I make manifest in them, and which must place an Opposition between them, but with regard to the different Dogmas which they form themselves? Opinions which they might be well contented to be without, and Ceremonies which cannot make them better, separate them, and keep them divided. Tho' these Things did them no other Harm than to amuse them, and leave them always the same, they might easily conclude they were not obliged to me for them. How can they attribute them to me when they do them all possible Mischief, and they cannot demonstrate the least Good to result from them? They draw less Advantage from the Instructions they attribute to me than the most barbarous People draw from the Sentiments which remain in their Hearts, amidst those Opinions which they form in their Heads; and these unpolish'd People surpass them in good Sense, in what is most important, in what regards the good or evil Destiny of Man. The general and confused Ideas which they have thereon are such as influence the Ordinary of their Life, and serve them to regulate it; and they are far from believing that these Ideas alone, that the
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Acknowledgement which they make of it, stands them in stead of Religion. The gross Images which they form of the Deity shew how far they are from knowing him with that Knowledge which Revelation gives. Now true it is that in this Respect God has been pleased to hide himself from them; but the Ignorance in which they are, and the Differences between them about Religion, and even about their Divinities themselves, don't make them Enemies to each other, and seek their mutual Destruction; or at least these Madnesses are not common among them. They are corrupted like all other Men; but they cannot be accused of making use of Religion to increase their Corruption (to make Falshood to subsist in them, and to strengthen it). What they call Religion does not plunge them into a Security, into an Indifference towards what is good; that is worse than Corruption itself. They indeed bow their Knees to Idols, but the Love of Good and Hatred towards Evil are not absorbed in them, by the Worship which they render them. They continue to reverence the Sentiments innate to Man, and every one is valued among them in Proportion to the Effect these Sentiments have on him. They suffer the *Divine Instinct*, which produces them, to act, and they have really Religion.

The just God will judge those ignorant Men according to the Ignorance from whence it has not pleased him to draw them, and he will require no more of them. He is not like to an austere and hard Master, *who reaps where he has not sown, and gathers where he has not sowed*, as the unprofitable Servant accused him. He will be contented with the real Respect which they have for what is Divine in them, with the Worship which they render'd him in the Bottom of their Hearts, in Proportion as he has manifested himself

self to them. The Idolatry hateful to God among those who ought to know and keep themselves attached to him is not that which is brought about by Ignorance. Ignorance never was the great Evil of Man. 'Tis what the Malignity of the Heart produces which withdraws him from the Divine Will, and forms Gods agreeable to his own. 'Tis the Idolatry which sets up the Creatures for Divinities, and makes us depend on them, either for Truth, which only comes from God, or else for our good and evil Destiny, which also we ought to expect from Providence. These are the Gods which hinder us from seeing the Face of the true God, as they also hinder him from causing the Light of his Countenance to shine upon us. These are the * Gods upon his Face, that the Law so strongly forbids us to have. The other is but a Figure of this, and does not greatly anger the Divinity; but this irritates him, and causes the Misery of those who boast they know him, in preferring to him Creatures, Men like themselves; in doing their Will rather than his, and in preferring to his Truth the Dogmas and Opinions of Men, they renounce his Spirit, that Spirit which leads into all Truth, and sets Men at Liberty who are acquainted with it; and they give themselves up to the Spirit of Sect and Slavery, more opposite to the Spirit of Truth and Liberty than natural Ignorance, and perhaps more so than that Libertinism which Nature produces.

They join in acknowledging One God, and in referring themselves about him to One Divine Book;
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* There is a Note that this is a true Translation of this Expression in the Law.

but on Account of some different Circumstances of the Worship which they render to him, and the different Manners of understanding some Words of the Book, they violate its whole Contents, all that is most essential in what God requires of them, and about which they are agreed among themselves. And where is it, in short, that Prophaneness and Atheism (or the Endeavours towards it) are honourable, and looked upon as Freedom of Thought? And where are Uncleanneſs and Libertiniſm become as Heightenings to Discourse by the Manner of uttering them? Barbarous People have never renounced Humanity thus far. They have not adorn'd themselves with Infamy, and in their Nakedness they have more Modesty than there is among those who are cloathed, and who, for the most Part, conceal Filthiness under a fine Appearance. This is true in every Sense, and is what makes their Unhappiness. Is it Religion? Are they the Truths of Christianity which render those among Men to whom they are declared worse than those who know them not? No; 'tis their daring to abuse them: 'Tis those among them who are very bad, and make Profession to render them good, that do them all the Mischief. In their extreme Corruption they corrupt both the Truth which they handle and Men who expect to receive it from them; as a bad Leaven corrupts the whole Mass with which it is mixed. They discredit Conscience, which is the Bridle of Man, and in its stead substitute Science, Discourses in the Air. They speak Peace, and apply the Divine Promises to malicious and deceitful Men, who by that Means fortify themselves in their Malignity, and become compleat Atheists and Monsters.

If one could disabuse those who pride themselves in the Name of Christians, and make them look upon
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with other Eyes those who bear a less Name, and whom from thence they take Occasion to despise, one should do them a considerable Service. The wrong Comparisons they make between themselves and the Pagans would fall of course, and they would make others less to their own Honour, and which would be of more Use to them. It seems that Providence had this in View, as it has permitted that the Writings of some of the Pagans should be handed down to us, and that we should be informed of the Lives of some others. The Pagans are Men like us, and like us they are beloved by the Creator, in Proportion as they answer the End of their Creation. If, instead of giving them an honourable Name, or a glorious Task, he has given them one that abases them, 'tis not thro' any Hatred that he has to them; for he hates none of his Creatures. It is because there should be a Diversity among Men, which might afford him Room to manifest his Wisdom and Justice in the Variety of Rewards and Punishments which he should appoint. Those among the Pagans who finish their Task shall be treated and recompensed as faithful Servants, even preferably to those Christians with whom they have the same Degree of Justice. These latter, who have a greater Task, and who pride themselves in it, shall be severely punished if they fail to perform it, more severely than those Pagans, to whose Level they are descended. And 'tis this Way that Things are tending, both on one Side and on the other.

Let us therefore judge better than we do of the Pagans, who, generally speaking, are better People than we are; and especially let us have more Regard for those among them who may one Day rise up in Judgment against us, for those would be our Judges already in their Writings would we but apply them. Let

us know them, and this Knowledge may help us to know ourselves, which we want, and by that Means become a very useful Knowledge to us. *Socrates, Epictetus, Marc. Antoninus*, and others besides, were not a different Sort of Men among the Pagans which were sent to them; these just Men were taken out from amongst them; and, as among us those of the most Merit are closely follow'd by others who aspire to it, it cannot be doubted but in different Degrees they had their Equals as well as their Inferiors. These Men ordained to be known, as others are to remain unknown, these Men more known by us than the others, were not content to be virtuous according to the common Notion of Vertue; they had God for their End, and devoted the Ordinary of their Life to him. The Motives (which make the Value of Human Actions) were in them as they ought to have been; and Divine Wisdom has borne them Witness in manifesting herself to them, in order to enlighten them, as well as to guide them. She has infused into their Writings that insinuating Truth, that deep Sense, which renders the Discourses of Men valuable, and which are never in the Writings of such who are not devoted to her. And why was she pleased that the Writings of an Emperor and a Slave should have been handed down to us, and make us know the Gifts she has conferred on them, but to teach us that she knew the Pagans from the least to the greatest; that she favoured every one of them as she saw meet, and that the different Conditions of Men as little hinder 'em receiving her Gifts as their different Religions or Beliefs?

The little that we know of the Lives of those two Men does not belye their Writings, and makes us regret that we know not the rest. Providence has pleased the Life of *Socrates* should have been more known

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to us; that he should have been set as an Example to Men, by what speaks louder than Human Writings, by the familiar Commerce which the Spirit that guided him entered into with him, and by all the Advantage he reaped by this Commerce, without any other Assistance (without being obliged for his Ability to Instructions from abroad); the Obedience rendered to the *Divine Instinct*, to the Voice which spoke to him in his Heart, gave him all the Ability that was necessary to confound the Sophists, the Doctors of those Times; from whence all Establishment of the Truth must take its Beginning. He prevailed on Men to make Room in themselves for sound Ideas, and his Ability had every Mark of true Ability, so scarce among us; of that which arises from the Heart's being devoted to Truth; the Ability which tends more to destroy the Prejudices which are Obstacles to Man than to make him receive Truths that do not concern him. The simple Obedience which *Socrates* render'd to his Genius, to the *Divine Instinct* within him, did only procure him those great Advantages, but, of one born a Pagan, and brought up among the Errors and Corruptions of the Times in which he lived, made him a holy Man; a Man separated from Evil to a Degree that those Times and the Designs of Providence then required; a Man, who, after having employ'd his Life in instructing Mankind, after having answered the Vocation which he received for that End received the Reward of the Witnesses, what seals the Divine Truth, Calumnies and Accusations from corrupt Men, whom he endeavoured to make better, and Death itself, which he suffered with Tranquility, and in such a Manner as must confound those who contend that the future Happiness or Misery of a Man is determin'd by they call Christianity and Heathenism.

These People destroy, by the wrong Reasonings which they make on this Subject, that salutary Confusion which the Discourses and the Life of those exemplary Men might occasion, not only to the vicious Men of our Times, but even to good People, to those of them who in their Relaxations set Bounds to this Character, which the Pagans have not done. In every View, in our Times as well as in those that are past, we may abundantly find among the Pagans wherewith to confound those who pride themselves in the Knowledge of the True God; and with whom it goes no further than just pronouncing his Name; to say *To-day Lord!* and again *To-morrow Lord!* in the reiterated Worship which they render him, without doing his Will, without serving him. Thus also the grand Tryal is about to manifest the Works of Men, and let them see what their Worship is. The violent Rain, and overflowing Floods, the Inundations of War formed suddenly and near at hand, and those which in a greater Number come from afar, and the formidable Winds of the Spirit of God, which must put every Thing in Motion, are about to prove the great Edifice of Religion, as well as the little Buildings of every one in particular which compose it. It will be seen if they are built on the Rock on which they profess to depend if they stand the Shock to which they shall be exposed, or if, by their Fall, by their very great Ruin, they shew themselves built on the fluctuating Sand of Man's Word, which consists in understanding without accomplishing.

The terrible Revolution which must renew the Knowledge of a God, become as superannuated among Men, has been already, and shall yet be, declared to them; but Men are taught to despise these Advertisements, and to regard as Fanaticism all that Divine

vine Wisdom may cause to be declared to them by the Prophets, the Witnesses of Truth, that she might send to them, as well as not to attend to what she might speak to them by the inward Sentiments. There shall come no more Prophets, say those to them who have set themselves in the Place of the Prophets, and speak Peace to them; and they believe them. On this Head it would be right to disabuse Men, and let them see the Ground of what their Doctors say to them thereupon, and what Confidence they ought to have in them. The Divinity speaks to Men by the Word, which he pronounces in the Heart of every Man, to let him know his present Will; but all Men do not hearken to it, and he is obliged to speak outwardly to Men become outward, to send them Messengers who may speak to them as from him, and who are themselves inwardly directed by his Spirit. When he has any extraordinary Warning to give us, he sends us Prophets; he puts his Word into the Mouths of some, and into the Hearts of others. The first declare the Truth to simple Souls who have Faith; the latter present it to those who like Reasoning, which they make use of that they may receive it. The *Divine Instinct* then owns and directs it, and it differs from the rash Reasoning of those who turn Men aside from the Truth as much as the Iron with which the Loadstone is armed and fortified differs from common Iron, which by its Approach might hinder its Operation. The Voice of Conscience, and that of the Witnesses of Truth, were at all Times the Ways of the Divinity to speak to Men, and 'till the Times come that all Men are immediately taught by him, that the *Divine Instinct* set at Liberty in them does its Office in all, those shall be always his Ways; they agree both with the

Divinity and with Man. There is no Reason to make him change them, nor are there any other Ways more exact to make them successful. If there are People to whom they are disagreeable, 'tis those who have their own Word to put off, those who, being entered, thro' false Motives, into the Ecclesiastical Order teach for Gain, and who, to extend it, and to merit the Salary they receive, extend their Teachings, and entertain Mankind with a thousand Things that are out of Season, with what they have learnt from their Schools and their Books. They would have Difficulty to vend all those Inutilities, if Conscience, in its succinct Language, (and perfectly adapted to the present State of Man) was heard, if Men knew the Difference between that Truth which is Light, between Divine Truth and what they give them for Truth, and which is nothing but an Image of it, that dazzles them. Their Doctors and their blind Guides are obliged either to set at a Distance from them this Knowledge, to reject in themselves the Voice of Conscience, or to cease carrying on the Trade which they do, and which their Conscience would disapprove did they not stifle or confine it. It would reprove them for rashly undertaking to serve as Guides to others in a Way in which they themselves do not travel, and would first of all require of them to be converted themselves before they pretend to convert others.

Refusing to hear it in themselves when it talks this Language to them, they cannot but reject it in others, and are not only of the Number of those to whom the Divinity manifests himself not; and whom he makes no Use of to manifest himself to others; but are in a Way which leads them to every thing that is bad both for themselves and others. Being no longer restrained
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by what alone is capable of restraining Men in their evil Inclinations, they give themselves up to that which is in them, to the false Interest that guides them, and they are the Dupes of that Malignity of Heart which they would not suffer to be destroyed in them. It tells them, that to support themselves in the Employment which they have chosen it is not sufficient to discredit the *inward Word*, to cast out and kill the *Instinct*, which is the Heir, that the Inheritance may be theirs, but they ought to settle it as an important Point that there shall be no more Prophets, Men animated by the Spirit of God, who, without Fear of displeasing Men, shall tell them the Truth that is convenient for them, and who would not fail to tell it to themselves, and to tell them terrible Truths too. The Scripture, say they, the Scripture contains all that God has to say to Man; it is sufficient for us; and all these Novelties are of no Use. They make of the Words which God has caused to be written as a Text to be explained by his Spirit, when he shall judge proper. They make of it, I say, a Word quite explained by what they say about it, and they take Means to hinder the Divine Being from speaking to us that which must especially make Way for it, and make us acknowledge the Words of the Divinity for what they are. They subject the Divinity more to his own Book than they subject themselves to it, and by the Explanation which they give of this Divine Book, they undervalue and darken it, instead of making it understood and revered. The Scripture has incontestably a hidden Sense, and tho' this Sense should not be discovered, it must be supposed. A Divine Book must have it, and by that Means be distinguished from the Books of Men: But, to the great Joy of those who have supposed this inward Sense,

Sense, it begins to shew itself. The Divinity by this Means speaks to the inward Man, capable of comprehending it, and this new Sense of the Scriptures will be found as much more important than the old Sense, by which it only spoke to the Reason, as the inward Man is more important than the corporal Man, whom Reason is capable of guiding. In this Sense the Scripture is a Book sealed to the Doctors, and none but the Spirit of God can give us the Understanding of it, and thus, with regard to the Scripture itself, we have Need that the Divine Wisdom should send us Prophets, Wisemen, and Scribes; and she has promised to send them to us. By the Obstacles which their Enemies endeavour to throw in their Way, they think to provide for their own Safety, and hinder those whose Places they fill (and who indeed would be what they have most to fear) from coming to trouble them; and for the same Reason they hate they should come, which alone can hinder them from doing Men all the Mischief and Evil that false Doctors and false Prophets can do them, and they draw on themselves the Accomplishment of the Threatnings which the Scripture denounces on them. The Divinity permitted that they succeeded thus far in their Design, that they should attain that Dominion they had in View, in order that the Malignity of corrupted Man, his Capacity to seduce by the Means of Knowledge, and his Inclination to give himself up to that Seduction which flatters him, should be entirely manifested, and give Room for the Divine Justice to manifest itself in the same Proportion.

The Times of this Manifestation, the Times which must change the Face of Things, are come, and tend to put an End to Seduction. The Doctors and rash Guides, those who hate one of the Two Masters,

sters they have undertaken to serve and love the other; those who have spoken to Men on the Part of God without his having given them Order, without his having made himself known to them, without having done it in his Fear, and, what is a necessary Result from it, without having seriously endeavoured to beget this Fear in others; those who after having put under the Bushel which measures out to them their Salary the Light which they pretend to have, and who will not that Men, who in Truth have the Light, should put it on the Candlestick, that it may enlighten all that are in the House; those who have decided there shall be no more Prophets, and have taught Men to reject them, when the Divine Mercy might send them to them; all the Doctors and Leaders, who think themselves in Security, because they feel themselves united in Character and Interest with Men, from whom they seek their Portion, shall meet with a terrible one; and all their Skill, all their Precaution, shall not guard them against it. After having been sufficiently recompensed by Men, whom they have served, and served to their Liking, it remains also that they should receive a Recompence from Him to whom Men belong, and towards whom they have not led them; from Him whose Servants they have declared themselves to be, and whose Interests, in the Eyes of all the Earth, they have sacrificed to their own: He prepares one for them that shall surprize them, and, at the same Time, shall let all the Earth know, that he whom they call *Lord* knows them not; that they are the Blind, who see not the Ditch which is prepared for them, and into which they are ready to fall; for the Divine Book, the Scripture, which they make a Trade of explaining, sets it before their Eyes in all its Circumstances.

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But they see it not; and by a double Degree of Blindness, which the Divine Justice dispenses to them for having despised Prophecies, they shall not see it, when those who have the Spirit of Prophecy shall shew it to them. They shall lead into it with them those among Men who have followed them to the End; all those who would let themselves be turned aside by reasoning from the Voice of Conscience awakened in them, and the external Testimonies which are addressed to them, and which their Conscience confirms.

Those who declare themselves contrary to the Divine Truth, to the Stone rejected, and become the chief Stone of the Corner, shall fall on it in endeavouring to oppose it, and shall be bruised; but it shall grind the others to Powder, the Authors of all that Evil, on which it shall fall.

He whom they encounter will oppose to that Sort of Order they have established a Sort of Disorder; to that Wisdom which maintains and makes valuable this Order he will oppose Foolishness; to that Strength with which their Wisdom aids itself he will oppose Weakness: His Foolishness and his Weakness shall be found stronger than the Strength and Wisdom of Man. By this he shall manifest himself to Men as the Living God, as the Wonderful and Mighty God.

It is to be wished that Men had other Ideas of the Judgments they must go through, and the State of Souls after Death. Those which their Doctors give them have always been very insufficient. But in the Times on which we enter, when the Scourges of God are about to ravage the Earth, they are like to prove more fatal to them than ever. They only speak to them of a certain Day of Judgment, so distant in the Ideas they form of it, that, in that respect, it is put into a Proverb. On the Issue of this they make
Men

Men go into Heaven or Hell ; but mostly into Heaven, whose Entrance they render very easy. Other established Manners of speaking place Men in Heaven on their leaving this World ; so that one Way or another they find what makes them secure on that Head, and wherewith to comfort themselves under the Necessity of dying. In the mean while it would be better for Men to know that they must pass thro' very severe Judgments, by different Judgments, and which answer to the Creation of Man in the Image God. The first is that which passes in the Conscience, which is the Tribunal of God within us, where his Spirit judges us continually. If we suffer ourselves to be judged by him it is as if we judged ourselves ; and by this we do what is recommended to us, and which make one of the Praises of the Sons of *Abraham*. As the Omission of this * Judgment is one of the Reproaches made to the Scribes and Pharisees, the Man who submits himself to this Judgment of the Spirit of God, and does not confine it, avoids being judged after another Manner, and enters by Death into Life. This is the Advantage of the Saints and Disciples of *Jesus Christ*, of those who believe truly in him, and take up his Cross. There is the Judgment when *Jesus Christ*, at the Time when he shall reign as King, judges the *Gentiles*, all those among Men, conducted mediately ; and to whom nevertheless he had offered himself as a Shepherd ; as him who is the true Shepherd of Souls, and who by their Faith or their Incredulity had rendered him favourable to them, or the contrary. All those who shall either have done Good,
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* All the Translators put the Word Justice, and Uprightness, instead of the Word Judgment, which is in the Text *Gen. xviii. 19. Math. xxiii. 23.*

or refused to do it, to the least of those whom he acknowledged for his Brethren, and who having past through this Judgment shall then reign with him. This Judgment will come to pass during the Reign of *Jesus Christ* upon the Earth, which shall not last less than a Thousand Years, and into which one enters by the first Resurrection; for 'tis then that he reigns as King. Those of the *Gentiles* to whom this Judgment is favourable shall partake in the Joy of the Just, whom they shall have comforted in their Affliction, and shall enter into eternal Life; and those who shall have opposed him, those who through the Hardness of their Heart shall have refused to comfort the Afflicted of *Jesus Christ*, on the Occasions he presented to them, shall go into eternal Fire. Every Thing that relates to *Jesus Christ* is so important, that even externally, and as he inhabits in his own, Men have an Opportunity of rendering him favourable to them, and should be careful not to turn into Wrath that Grace which is offered to them.

At length the last, the universal, Judgment is held. God himself, God as Creator, is here the Judge; for as Father he judges no Man.

The Dead, those who have not that Life of the Soul they ought to have, are judged, not according to the Works of Faith, which they have not known, but according to their Works, as far as in their Nature they have been good or evil. Those to whom this Judgment is favourable shall not, therefore, enter into eternal Life, into a State of Felicity and Glory, like the others; they are only saved from the second Death, into which they were in Danger of falling; and they shall be under the Reign of God what common Men are under the Reign of the Kings of the Earth.

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The Sea, which at the Time of this Judgment gives up its Dead, is not simply the natural Sea, which at the Time of the Deluge swallowed up those that perished in it. We must further understand by it the World, which swallows up in the same Manner those who take Pleasure in it, all those who suffer themselves to be withdrawn from the Tribunal of God, from Conscience. And the Number of those Dead is much larger than the other. All Men become Flesh; all those who live but to content their natural Desires are the Dead of this vast Sea; the others were but an Image of it, as the Sea is of the World. 'Tis especially the future Lot of the domestic Condition in its Corruption, those quite taken up with the Concerns and Interests of this present Life, that is painted out to us by this, and the Deluge is an Image of this Swallowing up. Another State more sad, called Death, is of such who go further than giving themselves up (thro' Weakness) to all that can satisfy their Senses. To give themselves a full Swing, they are not afraid to commit all Sorts of Injustice, and they at last go so far as to stifle Conscience, that Seed of Life which is in them. Those are entirely dead, and among others they give a Proof of it, in becoming Persecutors, in giving, without Pain, as those who have lost all Feeling, bodily Death to those who are as the Seed of Life upon Earth. These are Men internally bad of the Political Order.

Hell is a worse State, more terrible yet. 'Tis that of Men who, not content with giving themselves up to Evil without Reserve, do as it were devote themselves to it from Inclination, who hate what is good, the Divine opposed to what comes from them, and make War on it, in seeking to destroy what comes
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from God. These are Men entirely corrupt of the Ecclesiastical Order. They improve on Death as Religion improves on Nature, and animate that Hell which is manifested on the Earth thro' their Means. Death and Hell, joined together, give up their Dead. From Men corrupted to this Degree, and who have, in Concert as it were, swallowed up those who have yielded themselves up to them, these Dead are redemanded. They set before the Tribunal of God those Men they had withdrawn from it, those they had hindered from following their Conscience (from doing the Will of God) to do their Will, and whom by this Means they had caused to renounce that Life which should animate them. These Dead, as well as those of the Sea, shall be judged by their Works; but Death and Hell, which have withdrawn them from the Divine Will, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire. The Enemies of Truth in the Political and Ecclesiastical Order, those who in their extream Malignity are become even Death and Hell, and have strengthened each other for the Destruction of Mankind, shall be joined together in their Punishment, which shall be aggravated by this Circumstance, During Life they plunged themselves into a Lake, into a Gulph, of Corruption, to satisfy themselves in Evil, which they loved from Inclination; this answers to a Lake of Fire, where they shall satisfy Divine Justice. They shall there be melted down, as in a melting Pot, as a bad Piece of Work, which dishonours him who made it. The Beginning of their Judgment shall come to pass when the Beast and false Prophet are seized alive, and thrown into the Lake of Fire. These are the Chiefs of the Order of Persecutors. Here they are accompanied by all those who belonged to them, and who till then had only been punished

nished by a State of Death and Hell. The Numbers of Dead which they have produced, and which subject them to this last Judgment, inflames anew the Wrath of God, and causes him to punish them with the last Severity. The Burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorra*, where at present is found a Lake which smells of Fire and Brimstone, is an Image of this terrible Judgment.

After this Sentence is pronounced, and which fills with Fear and Despair those whom it regards, there is yet the Book of Life, the Book of the Divine Mercy, which judges to Life those who are found written there. Whoever is not found in the Book of Life, if, in the Search which is made for all those to whom it is possible to shew Favour, there shall be found any in whom there is nothing that should move the Pity of God towards his lost Creature, the Sentence pronounced is executed; he is thrown into the Lake of Fire (which is the second Death), into the Fire of Refining, which, to find out Evil in the Bottom of the Soul, where it is rooted, dissolves, as we may say, the Soul itself, as a precious Metal which is to be purified is render'd liquid by the Violence of the Fire, to the End that the Alloy, which renders it impure, may be separated. All the Fury of which Man is capable, and which had secretly animated him against others, is here turned against himself, and makes him feel what that Death is which he has preferred to Life; and of which the Death of the Body, with all the Agonies attending it, is but an Image. This is the true Death, the Death formidable by its Duration, as well as by what is grievous in itself, since 'tis the last Enemy that shall be destroyed.

These are the Judgments where the Divinity, with

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regard to the Mystery of his most holy Trinity, manifests himself in Justice, as in the Creation of Man after his Image he manifested himself in Goodness.

There is yet one Sort of Judgment given immediately after Death. By this the Soul learns its Destiny, either to enter into States of Purification, which finish in her the Work of Salvation begun on the Earth, and to give her that perfect Holiness, which she has neglected, and without which no Man shall see God, or to enter into the dark Abodes where the Souls entirely corrupted await that Judgment which must give them up to the Punishment they have deserved, or finally to enter into that Place of Rest ordained for those who have finished their Task. This Judgment is pronounced by the Ministry of Angels, who, in their different Orders, regulated on the Difference of Souls, put it in Execution. 'Tis in relation to this Judgment that one may understand what is said in general, that it is decreed that all Men should die, and that there should be a Judgment for them. The Scripture gives a Warning to those who neglect to pass thro' that inward Judgment which puts Men in Security with regard to other Judgments; and this Warning is of the utmost Importance in those Times, in which Death is about to place Men in the different States which I have just described. Agree with your Adversary presently; do not delay to satisfy Divine Justice, which accuses you in your Conscience, and bears Witness against you. Do it while you are in the Way with him, while Conscience speaks to Man, and that, to give Place for this Agreement, the Scourges threaten'd to be inflicted on the Inhabitants of the Earth are suspended, whilst Divine Mercy which has fixed a Time for it, renders the Thing easy; for Fear lest he give you over to the Judge, to an angry God,

God, who pronounces on Man a Decree that gives him up to himself, and reserves him for Punishment, and the Judge to the Minister of Justice, to Death, which is going to mow down Men come to their Maturity, and to cut them from off the Earth; and that you may not be put in Prison, in the deep Places of the Earth, where those Souls are detained who, thro' their Inclination for earthly Things, have put off to the future what was required of them for the present, or who have reckon'd the Voice of Conscience, which spoke to them, as a little Thing; all those who owe little or much to the Divine Justice, which, in order to set them free, made itself known to them in their Hearts. I tell you of a Truth you shall not get out 'till you have paid the uttermost Farthing. Do not let yourselves be imposed on by those who flatter you with an assured Salvation, founded on the Divine Mercy, and given because of Creeds and Ceremonies, a glorious Felicity, into which the Soul enters on leaving the Body, or at least without further Purification. This Salvation is inconsistent with the Divine Justice and Sanctity; and you may reckon on it as a certain Thing, that if you once enter into the Prisons of the Justice of God, his Mercy will not take you out from thence. All the Disobediences of which you shall be found guilty towards the Spirit of God, all the inward Reproaches which you let pass without giving them proper Satisfaction, shall be put to Accompt, and cost you dear to repair. You shall not get out of those Places of Punishment 'till you have satisfied for the least Disobedience as well as for the greatest; and the Exactness of the Divine Justice, extended even to the least Things, shall teach you what it is to have the Eye of God turned on Man, and what Reverence Man owes him.

Let us speak to Men of Paradise as well as of Judgment and Hell, since the latter Times manifest it in the same Manner, and will make the Earth a Theatre of the Wonders of the Divine Œconomy, of the Wonders wrought in the Light, and in Love, as well as those which are wrought in Darkness and Wrath: For the different Periods, which Providence causes to succeed one another, have their Source in the Heart of Man; and it is only because Divine Wisdom manifests what is hidden, that the Times become good or evil upon Earth.

The terrible Judgments which shall cut off from the Earth the Enemies of Truth and Peace arise principally from the Loose given to Evil, which till then had been restrained in them. The Divine Mercy shortens those Times, and they shall but just pass. The happy Times which succeed them, and which shall be of some Duration, shall give a Loose in the same Manner to the Good which has been wrought in Men of Good-will, and which, flourishing and extending itself on all Sides, shall change the Face of Things, and bring back Paradise on the Earth. The Just who are dead have their Paradise in that Abode agreeable to the State of Souls separated from the Body; and the Place where they are together is properly Paradise. The Just who are yet in the Body have their Paradise on the Earth, such as the State of Man here below permits. Both one and the other enjoy the Delights of Paradise in Proportion to the Good that is in him, and which Paradise gives him the Enjoyment of. The Times ordained for this Enjoyment begin actually to form themselves; and there is a Pleasure in talking of Paradise, which is ready to shew itself.

Paradise is the Garden of God, and a Place of Delight

light for Men; for those who are truly Men, formed by his Hand, and made a Living Soul; as Paradise is planted by his Hand, and filled with Plants that have Life. The Life of the Soul consists in the Divine Truth, in the Word which is declared in it, and which is its Light. The Man who is animated and quicken'd by this Life governs the Body and keeps it in Order, and gives up himself as a free Man to all that the Truth requires of him; and, what is not less essential to him, he is united, in the Truth, to whoever is a Man like himself, to his Neighbour, whom he loves as himself. However delicious Paradise may be, it is not the Place of the perfect Felicity of Man; as the Love of Truth and his Neighbour does not constitute his highest Perfection. As a Garden, however fine it may be, is not the Habitation of Man, but only a Place that he beautifies and makes delightful, Paradise is a Place of Recreation at the End of the Road which Man has already gone, and of Preparation for the Road which he is yet to go, and which has for its End his Union with God. This Union is of a Nature to be augmented to Infinity; and we must not imagine that what passes on Earth should be sufficient to form it in its utmost Intimacy; nor would the Soul, at its leaving the Body, be in a Condition to support the Sight of God in all his Majesty and Glory; and, for the greatest Part of Souls, Paradise itself, which is a Manifestation of it, is preceded by less glorious States. Paradise is the Habitation of the Man who is so far got into Order, that Divine Truth and Brotherly Love reign in him, and that by the Strength of this Love he sets himself above the Appearances which take up its Place among Men; above the false Paradise, the rest on the Earth proper for those who give themselves up to the Pleasures which it presents them.

them. Man enters Paradise by renouncing all which renders his Abode on the Earth agreeable, and which the Reason of Man declares to be innocent and allowable, but which the *Divine Instinct* condemns, and for which it substitutes what is disposed to make us disrelish it, and make the Earth an Habitation of Pilgrims to us. Those who under the Conduct of this Guide travel to the End in the narrow Way, and support courageously the Tryals to which the Singularity of the Journey exposes them, those who ravish with Violence the Prize which is at the End of the Race, are the Inhabitants of Paradise, which may be looked upon the Prize itself. Paradise, according to its first Foundation, is separated from the rest of the Earth, as a Garden is separated from the Fields and Meadows, from the Places less cultivated, that lie round it; and the Men ordained to inhabit it, and who are represented in Scripture as a Garden themselves, must be like it separated by a different Kind of Life from those who belong to the Earth. They must surpass them in Purity and excellent Fruits, as a Garden well cultivated surpasses the Orchards which are about the Country, and to which but ordinary Care is allowed; they ought to be such as a Life spent in a solitary Place may have wherewith to render them happy; such that the Tranquility they carry with them should put them in a Condition to give themselves up to that which they find there, and make them enjoy the Peace of their own Heart. In this Peace, and the Purity of Heart they enjoy that Love which God has towards them, and which is the Cause of their Love for God; they in some Sort enjoy God himself, who lets himself be seen of those who are of a pure Heart; and this Enjoyment, preferably to any other Thing, makes the Delight of Paradise. Among themselves they must be united, and form

form a Whole well fastened together, and well-proportioned, like the Trees in a Garden, which are not planted at Hazard, but which adorn it as much by the Order and Equality observed among them, as by the Beauty of the different Fruits which they bear. Inasmuch as Paradise is the Garden of God, Men themselves are its Plants, planted by him, and of whom he himself takes Care, in cutting and restraining them, to give them a Form which pleases him, and puts them in a Place where he will have nothing that is not agreeable to him. As far as Paradise is a Place of Delight for Men, they are its Inhabitants that other Plants may rejoice, Plants which are the Images of Men, and in what they have that is exquisite are for them what they are for God. Nature, which honours Man as Man honours God, Nature entered into Order, and carried to its first Perfection, to the Degree that he himself is, presents him all that can satisfy him, as he presents to God what satisfies him. But the Delights of Man become a living Soul, full of the Love of Truth, and Mankind regard principally the Soul; as much as it surpasses the Body in noble and delicate Properties, so much the Satisfaction it is capable of giving Man surpasses that of the Body, and makes him as much more happy. He becomes so by the Knowledge of the Wonders of the Divine Wisdom, which discover themselves in him by the delicate and ravishing Sentiment of Truth which presents itself to him, in the Bottom of his Heart, and delightfully satisfies his Thirst for Knowledge. His Heart itself becomes a Paradise for him, a Garden cultivated by the *Divine Instinct*, and filled with Plants exquisite by their Virtue and Odour.

Every Thing that Paradise has of delicious and satisfactory, is found, as in its Essence, in the Heart of Man prepared for Paradise, and 'tis only the perfect

Agreement, that his Heart has both with Paradise and those who must inhabit it, and form it with him, which makes it a Place of Delight both for him and them. Truth there unfolds itself as in the Habitation which is prepared for it, in that peaceable Region where are found the sweet Accords that make up its Harmony. Here he is set at large himself, and in giving a Loose to Truth he has the Satisfaction of contributing to the Happiness of others, as well as that of enjoying his own, which renders it compleat, as Truth is. This happy State is augmented by a continual Growth; the Souls called to glorify God, and to be united to him with a more intimate Union, go on from Grace to Grace, and passing continually from Truth to Life, they are no longer of that Number of Men whose Perfection only consists in being a living Soul. The Spirit renewed in them in the same Manner as the Soul, in the same Manner enters into what agrees with it, into the Divine Life; as the Soul is entered into that Life which arises from Truth, being disengaged from the Faculties of the Soul, as the Soul is disengaged from the Faculties of the Body, and united to God, from whence it came, it resumes its former Function, to have Dominion over the Soul and Body. And those entering this Way into their Origin, and becoming Men made after the Image of God, and according to his Likeness, pass from Paradise to other Abodes, which are devoted to the Divine Life, as Paradise is devoted to Truth, and to that Life which results from it: Abodes where they see God in all his Glory, and where they are made like to him.

The Scripture, in the Enigma which it proposes to us on the Subject of Paradise, speaks to us especially about two Trees, which make the principal Mystery

stery of it, and which it imports to know more than all the rest; for these mysterious Trees are found on the Earth as well as in Paradise, and if we look not well to ourselves, we shall be in Danger of deceiving ourselves, and taking one of them for the other, as the Inhabitants of the Earth have done hitherto. We must chuse between those two very different Trees, and they operate our Destiny, not only by continuing us in Paradise when we are there, or by causing us to be driven out from thence, but also by giving us an Entrance into it, or excluding us from it. That of the two by which we ought to abide, and which is planted in the midst of Paradise, has this Peculiarity, to have little Appearance, and hardly to make itself remarked. Man, in the Condition in which he is, Man, who will see, hardly sees it, and sees nothing in it to engage him to like it; but its Virtue is great, it gives Life to Man, and it gives it him forever. When he has tasted it he sticks by it, and wants no other Nourishment. He feels to grow in his Heart (where its Operations are carried on) Uprightness, Simplicity, Sincerity, a Relish for the plain Truth, for what leads to Life, and he feels a Disgust for all the rest. This Tree has its Name from its Virtue; it is called the Tree of Life, and is the true Centre of Paradise. Its Virtue flows in all the Plants which are there; all become salutary; and from it the Earth itself must draw its Renovation. Under this Mystery is represented to us the Divine Wisdom, which is the Tree of Life, and the Centre of Paradise. The other of those two Trees is the opposite of this; its Virtue is for the Head, and it has a fine Appearance; it surpasses that of the Tree of Life as much as the Figure of the Head surpasses that of the Heart; it bears Fruit, and this Fruit seems good to eat; it is agree-

agreeable to the Eye, and desirable to give one Knowledge: But 'tis a pernicious Fruit, in giving Life to the Head, in rejoicing it; it saddens the Heart, and kills that which is Divine in it; it carries us to know for the meer Pleasure of knowing, independently of what it should produce; it makes Man enter into the Consideration of Good and Evil indifferently, and makes him run the Changes on both; it makes him rest in the Knowledge of Good rather than in Good itself; and the Approbation which he bestows on it makes him take it for the Accomplishment of it. Evil which should not be known by him, or only known by the by, and enough to enable him to avoid it, it makes known with an extensive Knowledge, in which he takes Pleasure as in that of Good, and the Decision which results from it, the Condemnation which he pronounces on Evil, it makes him look on as what he chiefly owes himself thereon. Thus in making him see Good and Evil, in the Ideas which he forms to himself of them, it makes him confound them in their Effect, and the whole tends to Evil, to Knowledge, which is the false Life of the Soul. This Tree, as the other, takes its Name from its Properties; 'tis called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; it makes the false Centre of Paradise, and is planted there to serve as a Tryal, to place a Contrariety there which might manifest the Disposition of Man. By this Tree, wonderful in its Kind as the other, is represented to us the vain Knowledge which extends itself to what does not, as well as what does, relate to Man, and imposes on those who love Appearances. This is what has its Influence on the Earth, which is not renewed, and gives room to Men to make it a false Paradise. The Man who has a living Soul is ordered to abstain from this Knowledge, and the Punish-

nishment of his Disobedience (if he falls into it), or rather its natural Consequence, is Death, the Death of the Soul, whose Life only subsists in the Simple, in what is of the same Nature with it. To make this Tryal the stronger, a Serpent plays under this Tree, and which in the same Manner, under an Appearance that has nothing terrible in it, carries Death wherever it goes. By this Self-love is represented to us, which, without having any thing that is frightful in its Appearance, has underneath it every thing that we ought to dread, and which readily sets itself off with that Knowledge which the forbidden Tree presents it. This Serpent is more crafty than all the Beasts of the Field: The Artifices of Self-Love are infinite, and go beyond any thing that can be suggested by Passions alone. Those among Men of whom the Serpent is the Figure, those who in the Profession they have chosen, and which makes them be thought better than common Men, are as bad and worse than they. The Doctors and Leaders, who in their Corruption of Self-love, the Love of their Corruption seems to animate in a particular Manner, both for their own Destruction and that of others, have in the same Manner more Craft to accomplish their Ends than ordinary and natural Men. The Enemy of Mankind may make use of them more effectually; they reason, and set forth the Tree, in mixing the True with the False, as the Tree mixes the Good with the Evil, and by converting in the same Manner Truth into Falshood, they can secure against the Fear of Death those who would taste of the Fruit of the forbidden Tree, and they invite them to it. What, say they, shall Reasoning and Knowledge, which make the Excellence of Man, be forbidden him? What, shall he prefer to them the inward Sentiment, the Voice of Conscience,

ence, which we have so often seen to err, and which always errs if it is not enlighten'd by the Light of Reason? Simple Men, suffer yourselves to be preserved from this Fanaticism: Come, eat the Fruit of this Tree; it has the Virtue to open the Eyes, & to make Men clear-sighted to conduct themselves. You yourselves shall distinguish betw. Good & Evil; you shall do what the Divine Voice would do in you. You shall be made like the Divinity. Behold all those who eat it and do not die. Come, lose all Fear; eat of the Fruit of this Tree. Such is the Discourse of the Serpent. Providence permits it, because on him must fall the Weight of the Punishment, if Man by his Disobedience incurs it; and 'tis to be feared that something like this may happen; that among such who are called to be the People of God, there may be some who may be deceived by the Wiles of the Serpent, and deprived of the Enjoyment of Paradise. Will not Men be warned to guard against the Discourses of the Serpent? The Time to speak to them and to let them see his Wiles is come.

As the Mystery of the Re-establishment of Paradise on Earth is unfolded, that of Life and Death included in it must be unfolded in the same Manner, as well as the Mystery of the Serpent, who seeks to seduce Mankind, to which we must now return.

You to whom, in the Designs Providence has on you, Life and Death are presented, and who hardly give Attention to them, be awaken'd from your Slumber, and do not neglect the Knowledge of what must produce your good or evil Destiny. Know that the Death from whence you ought to guard yourself, and which the Serpent is capable of giving you, by persuading you you shall not die, is a thousand times more terrible than it appears at the Distance from whence

whence you view it. It makes itself known to guilty Man, when the Soul is separated from the Body, whose Life busied and satisfied him. Then he learns that the Death of the Body was but an Image of it; that the real Death is what he has drawn upon himself, that which relates to the Soul, and makes itself felt by it in its Corruption, the Death which devours it; as these Worms which are an Image of inward Remorse devour the Body. We are called to Life, and not to Death, to the Life of the Soul, which is the true Life of Man, and which in his corrupted State he is no more sensible of than that Death which is opposed to it. That which we enjoy in our Bodies is an Image of it, and the good Things which we taste are an Image of those which the Life causes Men to enjoy. In refusing to know Good and Evil in their Diversity, in ceasing to hearken to the Serpent both within and out of us, in refusing to amuse ourselves with the Images to which forbidden Knowledge leads us, we acquire the real Goods that are ordained for the single-hearted Man, who is led by the *Instinct* within him, and the Enjoyment of them makes us sensible how good God is to his Creature, and what that Life is to which we are called. Let us turn towards that which presents it to us, and which makes the Centre of Paradise; towards the Tree of Life; this Tree, which without us is the Divine Wisdom, and within us the Divine Instinct. The Divine Instinct is every Thing that is good for Man, and 'tis for this Instinct that all the Wonders are reserved by which God will make himself known to Men, and bring them back to his Fear, and to that Happiness which is the Consequence of it. How long then shall we suffer ourselves to be seduced by the crafty Discourses of the Serpent, to turn us aside from Life, from the Obedience

dience due to the Voice of God, which presents it to us in the Bottom of our Hearts? The Serpent would render it suspected by us, and magnifies the forbidden Fruit and the Tree which produces it, because he nourishes himself, and grows fat under this Tree; and if Men no longer eat of it, he would be of no Use, and be put out of Paradise.

Let us leave this Monster, much the more to be feared by some as he has Appearances so mild, and so very different from what he really is. Let us distrust the Thoughts of our own Heart, which turns us aside from Simplicity, and leads us after the Knowledge of what does not concern us, and what we are not principally, and for the present, interested in. Let us not hearken to Men who are in this Spirit; those who seek to engage us in vain Knowledge by specious Reasonings, and who, by dazzling us, only entangle us, as the shining Skin of the Serpent, marked with Nets, ought to teach us. Let us leave those who are only Head and Belly, who have neither Feet to walk in the Way in which they would serve us as Guides, nor Hands to do the Works they recommend to us. By the Belly, which is their All, and to which all their Snares relate, let us call to Mind the Curse pronounced on the Serpent; let us call it to Mind, by Means of their Nourishment, by what they feed themselves with, which at Bottom is but Dust; Words which have neither Relish nor Virtue, and which they produce to Infinity. By their knotty Discourses, as well as by their Snares, they only seek to make us like themselves, to make us take Knowledge for Reality, and to make us rest in the Conveniencies of Life as they rest in them. Let us expect nothing good from those who are made in this manner; and, especially, let us not hearken to their Reasonings, when they

they tend to make us suspect what Conscience says to us, who forbids us those Things which Men would not forbid us, but which God in his Ways, and his Thoughts, always opposite to theirs, may see meet to forbid us.

By the Serpent's Reasoning with the first Man, and which the Enemy of God and Man inspired him with, Sin entered into the World, and Man was made to rebel against him who had just created him, and who intended to make him happy. By this Means he lost Paradise, which was planted for him. What an Idea should this dismal Event, in which we are all involved, give us of Reasonings in the Business of Religion, and of those who frame them; of those who withdraw Men from the Obedience due to the Spirit of God, by inspiring them with Doubts about the Reality of what passes within them, and that under the Pretence that it is not likely that it should be God that operates it. It is not difficult to comprehend that what was at first productive of Sin is what continues to produce it; that this is what makes this Relation of Importance, and indeed every Thing that passes before our Eyes confirms it. Do not Men find Reason to do every Thing, and dare every Thing, to act against the most distinct Sentiments of their own Hearts, and the most precise Commands of God. If they want to be encouraged to do it, do not they find People ready for that End; Men of Ability, who make Profession of removing the Difficulties which arise in themselves, and to comfort them under the Agonies that Divine Justice sends them, which had rather make itself known to them in Time than in Eternity? Do not they generally lead Men to distrust the Interior, and what passes there, to mistake the Work and the Voice of God? God (who

on his Part is not wanting to come to the Assistance of seduced Man) is pleased to distinguish the Seducers by what may make us know them, and have them in Aversion. Does not he permit that in the Duties of Society, which is the first and the least Effect of Religion, they should be below rather than above the rest of Mankind? Are they not those who covet most after Honour, Riches, and Power, all that is most inconsistent with Faith in him whom they call Lord? And does not he on his Side disown them? Does he not hide from them the new Things which every Teacher, instructed in what regards the Kingdom of Heaven, brings out of his Treasure, as well as those Things which are old? And even those, the old Things, which they have stored up, is it from him they hold them? And are these Things of a Nature to be treasured up? Dogmas which set Bounds to the Empire of God, and extend that of Death almost over all Mankind, as well as thro' all the Eternities which may succeed each other, which make the Will of God (of a God who at last will be found to be only Love) the Cause of a Destiny which would occasion the everlasting Despair of the far greater Number of Mankind? Do they honour God? Are they proper Persons to lead Men to him, and make them love him? Have not they drawn those Dogmas of Death from the Letter that kills, and of which (in spite of the Warning given them on that Head) they have made themselves Doctors? To make their old Doctrine last, and to shelter themselves from being reproached with having nothing new, do they not beforehand declare against every Thing that is new; and by this, like senseless People, they endeavour to bound the Spirit of God, and reject what must clear up the Obscurity and Trouble which covers the Earth?

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In constraining Men on what they should or should not believe, by reducing them to their Dogmas thereon, do they not still, like senseless People, endeavour to enclose within their Conceptions, within their narrow Capacities, the free and immense Truth? Do they not reduce what should be the strongest and most efficacious Thing in the World to what is neither interesting nor affecting? to what, instead of awakening Men from their Slumber, lays them more soundly asleep? By inspiring Men with Hatred and Aversion for one another, by animating them against those who have different Opinions and Dogmas from theirs, do they not quite invert Religion, and turn that to a Curse which ought to be the Source of Salvation to all Men? Finally, the Persecution of the Just, which is the highest Pitch of Disorder; to whose Account is it to be placed? On what Race must fall so much innocent Blood as has been shed on the Earth? The Race which shall not come to an End till all that Providence has decreed for the Purification of the Just be accomplished. Never would Princes and Magistrates have run such Lengths of Violence, if the Clergy, if those of this Order, who are the Enemies of Truth, had not set them on. And it is certain that all the Evil Men have to fear from Seduction comes from those, who, without having the Truth in their Hearts, have set themselves to discourse about it, and to teach it to others for Gain; that is to say, to profane the Truth made for the Heart, made to be accomplished, and not for a Subject of Discourse and Business.

It is further true, that the deplorable State of Men, with relation to Religion; the State of Death, which by being the Bottom of their Character is the Source of their Misery, is principally the Work of those who by setting Opinions above Sentiments, and Dogmas

above Conscience, have set what is Human above what is Divine, and have rendered the Divine Truth, which alone can draw them out of their Misery, suspected and useless. All those Things, and especially the Capacity of turning Men aside from the Truth, to whom it had made itself known in their Hearts, the Pliantness, which brings it about, renders those Men Serpents who are devoted to it; it makes them Monsters to be feared and avoided; and the Spirit of God confirms this Name on them, by applying it to those who with a bad Heart had set themselves up as the Teachers and Leaders of Men, and who are an exact Figure of those who do the same Things at this Time. To the Name of Serpents, which he bestows on them, he adds that of a Generation of Vipers; which lets us see the Merit of those who form them, and are as Fathers among them, and what Obligations Men have to them. He declares them incapable of saying good Things, because they themselves are bad; and, by all his Reproaches on them, he completely instructs in what regards them. Good People, the Friends of Truth, who alone can speak properly of it, and make it valued on Earth, seeing themselves observed by those Enemies of Truth; have taken Byeways; they have been careful not to go against such or such an established Opinion, nor to clash with this or the other established Article of Faith, and insensibly have contracted and enervated the Truth; and Truth enervated has ceased to animate them to bear Testimony to it. By little and little good People, seeing themselves constantly opposed and crossed by the Enemies of Truth, have suffered themselves to be intimidated and silenced, and their Silence has anew encouraged the Enemies of Truth to give themselves a full Swing, and turn all into Opinions and Dogmas,
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and compleatly reduce Religion to nothing. From thence the Taste of Men, which, in whatever is good, depends on Religion much more than they think, has sunk lower and lower; till the Truths, the plainest and most agreeable to Religion, have seemed strange to them, and surprized them. They are quite disposed to prefer to Truth and Life, which are not to be had but at a certain Price, Illusion and Science, which cost them nothing; they readily take the Part of what does not disturb them in the dead Life they lead. The Enemies of Truth have thought themselves safe thro' this Disposition of Men, into which they have led them, and make their Game of them; they present them as Truths what is not false in itself, but which has no Relation to them in their present Condition, and is incapable of drawing them out of it; and they say, Is not this the Truth which we teach you? If Providence, in its Mercy, presents to Men the Truth that is convenient for them, the Truth in its Power and Efficacy, these Enemies of Truth, by one Word which they pronounce upon it, by treating it as Fancifism, turn it into Ridicule, and hinder it from having its Effect.

Such has been hitherto the Craft of the Serpent. Numberless Men have perished by hearkening to him; and even in the best of Times, in the Times we are entering on, we must expect nothing better on his Part; quite on the contrary. As Paradise shall flourish again on the Earth, the Serpent, ordained to be the Trial in Paradise, shall recover new Vigour; and by so much the more should we be on our Guard, and remember the Advices the Scripture gives us to preserve us from the Wiles of the Serpent; it teaches us that he will not change, that he will stop his Ears and not hear the Voice of the Charmer. These among

Men of whom the Serpent is a Figure, have as much Capacity to preserve themselves in Evil as to keep others in it, which is peculiar to false Ability; they oppose Knowledge and Reasoning to the Warnings which are addressed to them by the Witnesses of Truth; and they can make themselves insensible to all that has a Tendency to save them, to persuade them from being hurtful; they will not hear the Voice of the Charmer, expert in charming, that of *Jesus Christ*, when he addresses them with Exhortations proceeding immediately from his Spirit, and which would affect them were they capable of being affected. They have hardened others, and they are hardened in their Turns, to the End that they may fulfil the Scripture, that they may fill up the Measure of their Fathers, and may not avoid the Wrath which must fall upon them, nor escape the Fire of Hell with which they are threatened. They are capable of affecting an Alteration, and in the Times when all Things are renewed they shall be renewed also, and shall appear quite different in the Paradise that is about to be opened; but 'tis only to insinuate themselves, and hurt anew, and 'tis then especially that we ought to mistrust them. Nature, if we attend to it on this Occasion, gives us a particular Advice. The Serpent in the Spring casts his Skin, but he does not lose his Venom; quite on the contrary. By this Alteration he is rendered more disposed to do Mischief. It is the same with those whom the Serpent represents; in the Spring they leave their old Science, their superannuated Doctrine, and conform themselves to the Times, which require what is new, and present it to them as well as to all Men; but all the Renovation which may appear in them only tends to strengthen the Power of Death in them who preferr'd it to the Life that
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is offered to them, and will not learn to be mistrustful of Serpents. Let us observe the Advice that is given us: Let us be prudent like them; let us not suffer ourselves to be charmed, to be lulled asleep, by Discourses which have that Tendency. This Prudence perfectly agrees with the Innocence of Doves; with the Eye turned simply towards Good; towards what strengthens and nourishes us; toward the Task we have to perform. Those Men especially who are called to make War on the Serpent ought not to run the Risk of weakening themselves and strengthening him, by hearkening to him, by preserving those Decencies towards him which he requires, and which their Hearts disavow. The Aversion which they feel against him comes to them from Providence, and they ought to let it have its Course.

The Woman that hates the Serpent, as the Serpent hates her, is the Church of *Christ*, his true Church, which is made like him by Sufferings. The Enmity placed between her and the Serpent, and which has hitherto principally appeared on the Side of the Serpent, shall at length break forth in its full Force, and shew itself also on the Side of the Woman. The Witnesses which she begets in a great Number are the Seed armed against the Serpent. She is going to disperse them on all Sides, as a Seed of Life opposed to that Seed of Death which the Serpent disperses on all Sides. The Spirit of Jesus Christ in the Witnesses of Truth shall at last bruise the Serpent's Head; it shall confound that Knowledge which kills like a mortal Poison, and those in whom it is found, those who are nothing but Head. It shall cast them headlong into Death, and deliver Mankind out of their Hands. The Serpent, of his Side, shall bruise the Heel of the Witnesses of Truth;
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he shall stir up against them a violent Persecution, and make them lose that Life of the Body by which they were related to the Earth.

Those just Men who labour for the Salvation of others arrive at this State by letting themselves be formed by the Instinct, to which they entirely give up; and their Testimonies, proceeding from this Instinct, shall in Truth bring many to Righteousness. They shall recommend to them what they themselves perform, and by that Means be qualified to recommend it to them effectually, especially shall they teach them to reverence the Divine Instinct, and they shall awaken it in them. Let us suffer it to be awakened in us, and let us encourage ourselves to respect it, to the End that Providence, who may have Designs on us that we are ignorant of, may not find Difficulties to retard them. Let us turn towards this Instinct, and be sure to keep near it; let us feed on it as on a Tree of Life; and let us make it the Centre of our Heart, which will thus become a Paradise to us; let all it produces come from this Centre, and let all tend to it; let us make no Doubt but the Instinct is divine in all it does, and that it has Life in View, tho' we may not be able to discover whereto it tends. Our Confidence in it would be but small, if we were disposed to follow no farther than we see where 'tis leading us. Let us not be impatient, tho' we do not at first see all the Advantage that may arise from this Dependence; and especially let us not determine it by the Knowledge we are fond to have. The Divine Instinct is the Way before it is the Truth, as it is the Truth before it is the Life. It is neither Truth nor Life for those who will not acknowledge it for the Way, who do not begin there, and go on to the End; which is the Reason of all that Mis-reckoning that discourages the
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the most Part of those who set themselves to follow it, and makes them rebel against it. Let us not say that we don't see that this Tree has any Fruit. It is as if it had none; but it is more valuable by itself, by its Wood, than other Trees are by all the Fruit where-with they are loaded. Let us call to Mind that it disdains Appearances; that whatever draws the Attention and Approbation of Men, it leaves to the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which the Serpent makes to be valued by that Means. The Tree of Life, once more I say, has its Virtue quite within, and 'tis by making Man inward, in the same Manner, by making him lose Appearances, which are only for Time, that it gives him Life for Eternity. From this hidden Life arise, as from a new Principle, both his Actions and his Discourses. On the Outward they are near alike to his former ones, but in the Bottom they are very different, by the new Motive that produces them, and, as it were, changes their Nature. This is the Philosopher's Stone, which turns into Gold the most common Metals; but which few People discover. Those who have found it out keep it secret, and others deny there is a Stone of this Quality, and by that Means make themselves easy in not having it.

Every Thing here takes its Value from what determines it; nothing is valuable but because God, who produces it, is both its End and Principle, and that thereby it is consecrated to Eternity. Man in this State cannot but let God act, and give his Consent to it. He is the only Theatre, the Temple, where the Divine Wonders are manifested, the living Temple which the Divinity inhabits, and by this Means he comes up to the Design which God had in creating him, and is himself the greatest of all Wonders. He
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has not only Paradise and Life in him, but he becomes in some sort a Tree of Life to those who, wanting Faith to abide by the Divine Instinct in them, have Need of an external Help, which the Divine Goodness sends them by this Means.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

PAGE 10. Line 29. a Colon (:) to be placed at *Hearts*. *ibid.* l. 32. for *into* read *in it*. p. 15. l. 5. for *Man* r. *Men*. p. 20. l. 31. for *their* r. *the*. p. 23. l. 25. for *thereby* r. *therefore*. *ibid.* 29. for *what* r. *which*. pa. 26. l. 11. after *round* r. *you*. p. 33. l. 30. place a Comma (,) after *Men*. p. 32. l. 23. after *and* add *they think*. p. 35. l. 6. dele *all*. pa. 36. l. 32. place a Semicolon (;) at *present*. p. 38. l. 7. dele *so*. *ibid.* l. 31. add a Period (.) at *Man*. l. 32. dele the Period at *yourselves*. p. 39. l. 32. for *Enemies* r. *Monsters*. pa. 43. l. 7. dele *as*. p. 48. for *Men* r. *them*. pa. 50. l. 14. dele Comma at *Uprightness*, and place it after *especially*. *ibid.* l. 21. dele *not*. *ibid.* l. 35. dele *this*. p. 52. l. 14. r. *of working*. *ibid.* l. 26. after *exalts* add *itself*. p. 55. l. 3. for *what* r. *which*. p. 56. l. 2. for *them* r. *Men*. *ibid.* l. 7. for *it* r. *them*. p. 64. l. 5. for *Now* r. *How*. p. 65. l. 10. after *Destiny* add *on Earth*. p. 68. l. 30. r. *from receiving*. p. 69. l. 20. r. *did not*. *ibid.* l. 29. r. *Witnesses of Truth*. p. 95. l. 30. dele *selves*.

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